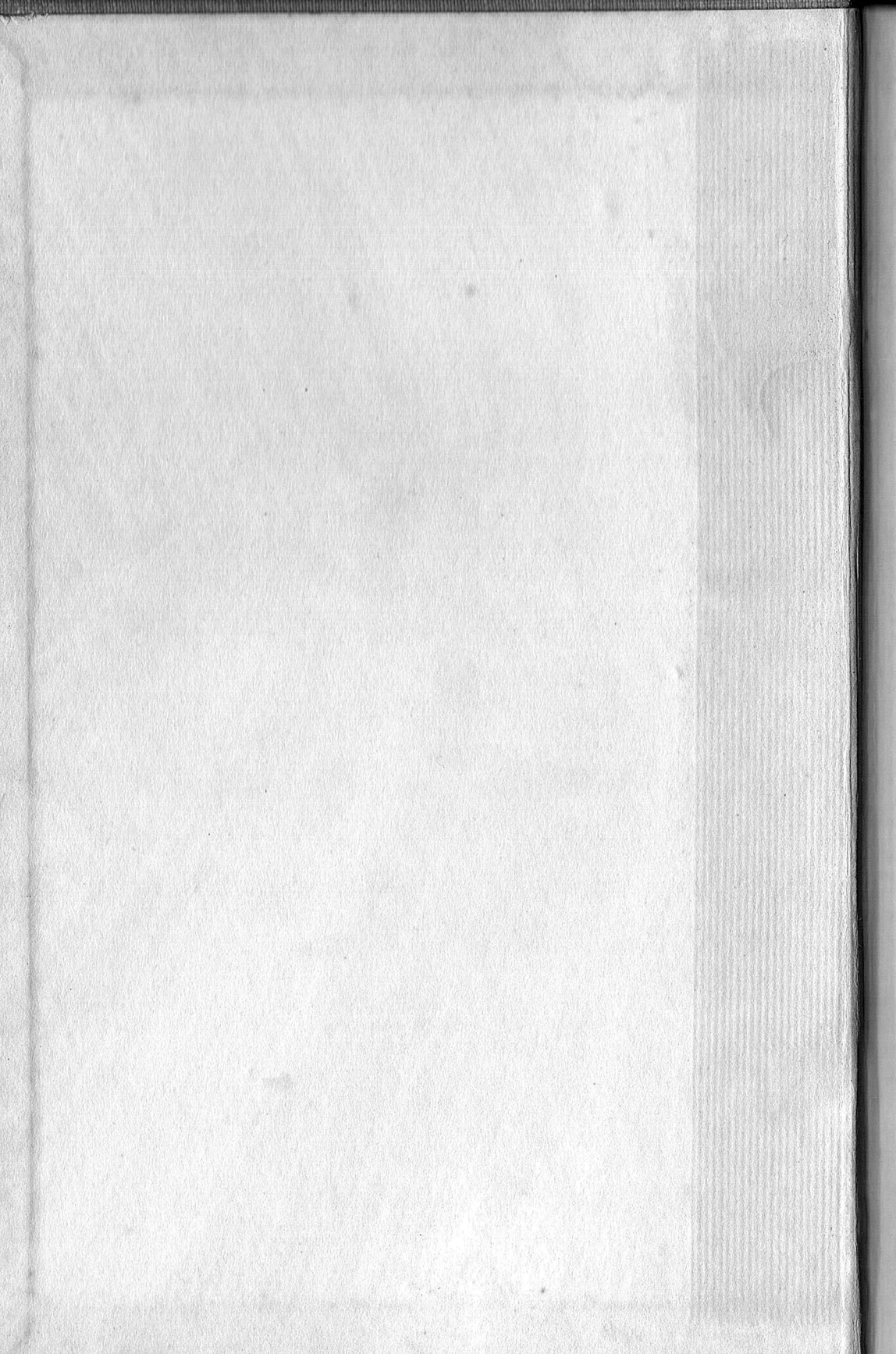




1934

John C. Johnson

MY
ADVENTURESOME
BANJO



MY
ADVENTURESOME
BANJO

by
ALFRED CAMMEYER

Alfred Cammeyer

CAMMEYER'S
D'ARBLAY HOUSE, 10, POLAND STREET, LONDON, W. 1
1934

MADE AND PRINTED IN ENGLAND BY
HENDERSON AND SPALDING LTD
AT THE SYLVAN PRESS
SYLVAN GROVE
LONDON
SE
15

SYNOPSIS

CHAPTER I

FIRST OFFENCE

The strange ways in which youth contracts and formulates hobbies ! Their influence often becoming so unbridled, frequently leading nipperhood into unforeseen destiny ! The chief Aquatic event of the year in U.S.A. ! The Annual Cruise of the New York Yacht Club ! Racing of the Big Yachts off Newport for the Goelet Cup ! The Old War Horse "America," spick and span, joins the festive Fleet ! The wild enthusiasm and warmth of reception upon the arrival of Sir Richard Sutton's famous racing craft "Genesta," the challenger for the America's Cup !

CHAPTER II

ADELINA PATTI

A memorable social evening with the Great Diva and Nicolini ! Her fondness of the Old Negro Melodies, which she used to quietly hum to herself whilst knitting ! Her fascination for the Banjo, the playing of same being one of her chief relaxations !

CHAPTER III

EARLIEST IMPRESSIONS OF RICHARD WAGNER

A school boy's first plunge into the mystics of this emotional grandeur ! The formation of the Wagnerian Society in London, 1872 ! Wagner's visit to London in 1877, staying with his old comrade the President and Founder of the Society, in Orme Square, whence he read, for the first time, the complete scenario of "Parsifal" ! The Autographed Photo (appearing in this book) of the Great Master, executed by His Own Hand !

CHAPTER IV

HENRY WARD BEECHER

Without doubt ! One of the Greatest Orators and Preachers America has ever known, classified amongst the most powerful forces within the United States since Washington ! His devotion to the justice and care of the Coloured Races, and his co-ordination with Abraham Lincoln in securing the emancipation of the Slave ! The simplicity of his family life, and his ardent love of Music !

MY ADVENTURESOME BANJO

CHAPTER V

BON VOYAGE

The influences tended by Adelina Patti and Mrs. James Brown Potter, that induced the author to take on the London Venture !

CHAPTER VI

FIRST TOUCH OF LONDON

The grand old Victorian Days of 1888 ! The vast, intense and loyal crowds that greeted their devoted Queen, when Her Majesty drove through the thronged thoroughfares ! The magic spell that thrilled a stranger from a distant clime upon experiencing that delightful kaleidoscopic vision of the fashionable West End ! How he bought it twice, in one day !

CHAPTER VII

PUNTING ROUND

The enjoyment of long rides, perched on the knifeboards, top of the Bone-shakers ! When Bond Street was a moving caravansary of fashion ! Theatreville in the time of Gas Footlights ! The famous Old Gaiety ! during the reign of Nellie Farren and Fred Leslie, the period when George Edwardes held the ribbons ! The Old Savoy, actually when Gilbert and Sullivan personally directed ! Leicester Square with its unique Music Halls, The Alhambra and Empire, then being the Homes of lavish spectacular ballets ! Possibly the earliest introduction of the Typewriter into England, by the Remington Company !

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIRST NIBBLE

The late Lord Rosslyn's visit to Mitchell's Royal Library in Bond Street, in search of some distinct novelty, to entertain at His Lordship's Home in Grosvenor Square, as the Duke and Duchess of Teck, and Princess May, were honouring His Lordship with their presence at dinner ! The prevalent idea that a white man couldn't play the Banjo ! The timidity and scepticism of Fashionable Leaders of Society, towards allowing a performer on the instrument, to entertain their guests !

CHAPTER IX

THE BARONESS BURDETT-COUTTS

A pen picture of this devoted and charitable Patron of the Poor ! Her Ladyship's Historical Reception to General Boulanger ! Every London Season in those days must possess a Lion !

SYNOPSIS

CHAPTER X BUTTING IN

Fashionable Receptions during the London Season of 1888 ! The sudden bereavement within the German Royal Family, that put paid to all Court and Fashionable Festivities ! Australians and Kent County (Cricket Match) at Canterbury ! After Church Parade in Hyde Park, the days when Smoking was banned ! The wonderful Nitrate Ball given by Colonel North, the Nitrate King, who commandeered the Hotel Metropole ! The opening of the Ball, heralded with a procession of trumpeters, heading the Colonel dressed as Henry VIII, escorting Lady Churchill dressed as Anne ! The Notorious Ice Carnival (Charity Bazaar) at the Albert Hall ! The American Stall, with its bevy of beauty and fashion !

CHAPTER XI SUBURBIA IN MAYFAIR

There's no limit to what a clever cunning brain can accomplish ! When Berkeley Square was the Hub of Fashionable Life ! The susceptibility of some tasting, for the first time, the glamour of its atmosphere, occasionally losing their balance, becoming pigeons.

CHAPTER XII AN ABSENT-MINDED BEGGAR

The extraordinary conclusion to a muddled brained Clergyman !

CHAPTER XIII CHESTERFIELD HOUSE

Lord and Lady Burton's Reception in Honour of His Royal Highness The Duke of Cambridge ! Must have scraped the super tax off thousands of bottles of Bass ! The wonders of this glorious mansion !

CHAPTER XIV CORNEY GRAIN

Undoubtedly one of the greatest entertainers at the piano the world has ever known, famous for his spontaneous wit ! His ridiculing and poking fun at his listeners in private drawing rooms was proverbial, without a guesser cropping up !

CHAPTER XV THE FAMOUS OLD PELICAN CLUB

The abode of the Duke to Commoner ! Sunday Night Boxing in the days of The Marquis of Queensberry (Q.), and Sir John Astley (The Mate). The resort of all the Leading Coaching Whips ! Coaching it to the Derby, the joy sights of the roads and the environment of Epsom Downs ! Friendly Billiard Matches for appreciable stakes ! The greatest Fiver's worth in Town !

MY ADVENTURESOME BANJO

CHAPTER XVI

A CLOSE SHAVE

A poisoning incident at Stockbridge Races ! There's no knowing what a venomous nature will resort to !

CHAPTER XVII

MR. ALFRED DE ROTHSCHILD

Most everybody in their own sphere of life has at some opportune moment experienced that peculiar mysterious tinge of delight, that seems unconsciously to waft spasmodically through one's system, creating joy, sympathy, and respect, when coming in contact with some superhuman force, so intensely impressionable, immediately conveying the idea of being a distinctive personality, such alone applies to that noble benefactor and patron of art ! Mr. Alfred de Rothschild !
The artistry of his beautiful home in Seamore Place !

CHAPTER XVIII

SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN (A SULLIVAN EPISODE)

Just a tiny picture of his lovable nature ! His anxiousness to always assist a struggling artist ! His personal charm as Host, when entertaining within his cosy flat in Victoria Street ! The millions he's gladdened with his delightful music, also the many millions to come, who will profit by his versatility and the enrichment bestowed upon the world !

CHAPTER XIX

A RIVER INCIDENT

General and Mrs. Owen Williams' Week-End Party at their famous Home on the Banks of the Thames "The Temple" ! Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Teck was honouring the General and Mrs. Williams with her presence, and had expressed a desire to hear the Banjo played again ! And what actually happened !

CHAPTER XX

"TEDDY"—HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD WHEN PRINCE OF WALES

The Prince honours Sir Edward Lawson at Dinner, followed by a Musical ! The festive gathering of the Royal Family at Sandringham in January 1892, to celebrate the last Birthday of the Duke of Clarence ! The party of entertainers who went down to assist in the enjoyment of the event ! Strolling about the estate, being shown all the principal sights ! The spacious Kennels, housing all Queen Alexandra's wonderful doggies ! The interesting Game Larder ! The Model Village, Old Inn ! The beautiful Church, where Their Majesties worship ! The Dinner at the Amphitriton Club, following the Baccarat Trial !

SYNOPSIS

CHAPTER XXI

AN IRISH PHANTASY

The Dublin Season in 1890, when the great event was the Horse Show ! The Two Command Performances at The Vice-Regal Lodge, when Lord Zetland was Lord Lieutenant : Honoured by the presence of His Royal Highness The Duke of Clarence ! Recitals at the Rotunda and Promenade Concerts at Ulster Hall ! High Life at the Famous Sheridan Club ! Gambling for huge stakes ! A delightful session at a beautiful Old Monastery !

CHAPTER XXII

A GOOD TIP

Shall never want a better !

CHAPTER XXIII

A PHEASANT SHOOT

It's unthinkable to imagine such an absurd incident ! Nothing similar will ever possibly happen again !

CHAPTER XXIV

OFF NIGHTS

Piccadilly Circus when the Lights were low ! The Rugby Scrum on the Pavement, following Closing Time ! The Favourite Supper Abodes in the Old Days ! The Fashionable Night Clubs, and their coterie ! The Famous Cab Shelter, known as the Junior Turf, in Piccadilly ! Probably the last important Prize Fight with the bare knuckles ! The all-night session down the Thames on a Steam Launch, minus Lights ! A miniature pen picture of (Q.) The Sporting Marquis of Queensberry !

CHAPTER XXV

ALFRED CELLIER

The Composer of "Dorothy" and many other famous Musical Works ! How he came to write the Overture to "The Gondoliers," in so short a space of time, owing to the sudden illness of Sir Arthur Sullivan !

CHAPTER XXVI

FOXY TRICKS

The contemptible means some Leaders of Society will lower themselves to, endeavouring to knock down the legitimate fees of Artists, who are required to entertain at their receptions !

MY ADVENTURESOME BANJO

CHAPTER XXVII

THE HONBLE. R——

The most mysterious individual the author ever came across ! The astonishing unexpected end !

CHAPTER XXVIII

ODDMENTS

The First Kaffir Boom ! The South African Magnates that made the dough and the wine flow, when the Savoy Hotel first opened its Doors ! Their prodigious entertaining, successfully succeeding in inveigling several feminist Society Leaders, by renditioning Swan-Song commissions, who itchyly perceived imaginary mirages of fabulous ouf, floating in the offing, hence couldn't forgo the temptation to well pepper the seeds of Moses, amongst their flocks of satellites, naturally drawing myriads of pigeons, to dabble in the gamble ! That famous Soubrette "May Yohe," who alone held London spellbound for a very long period ! Her fascinating ways more than charmed several members of the Royal Family ! And won the Hand of an English Nobleman ! Possibly Sir Henry Wood's earliest Conductorship !

CHAPTER XXIX

COUNTRY HOMES

The Social Atmosphere of "Ingestre Hall" ! Hindlip Hall ! Houghton Hall ! And Glorious Bramshill !

CHAPTER XXX

SCRAPS

Sir Daniel Gooch discovers an awkward trespasser ! A Brilliant Invite ! When Sir Arthur Sullivan played the Banjo ! That Merry-maker ! The Famous Dutch Daly !

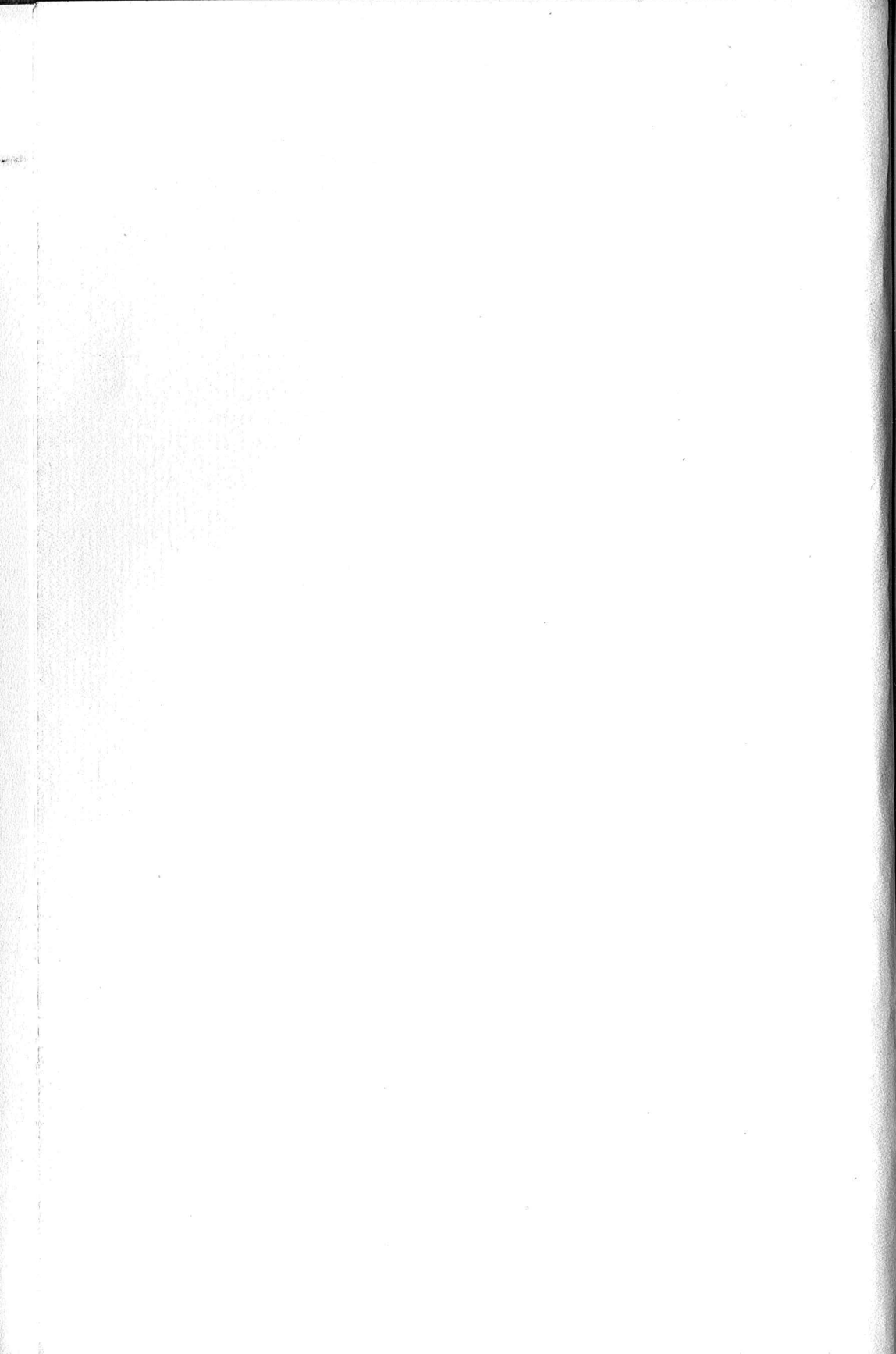
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FRONTISPIECE	<i>facing Title page</i>
MADAME ADELINA PATTI	<i>facing page 23</i>
RICHARD WAGNER	„ 29
BARONESS BURDETT-COUTTS	„ 91
CORNEY GRAIN	„ 145
MR. ALFRED DE ROTHSCHILD	„ 183
SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN	„ 195
KING EDWARD VII WHEN PRINCE OF WALES	„ 213
BRAMSHILL—EXTERIOR	„ 313
BRAMSHILL—INTERIOR	„ 321

CURTAIN RAISER

It is solely due to repeated requests from close friendships, that ultimately induced the author to relate numerous incidents and happenings, experienced during his earliest association with the mystics of music. He apologizes for the somewhat unorthodox manner they are embodied within the following pages, as his chief aim has been endeavouring to portray such in as brief a style as possible.

FIRST OFFENCE



CHAPTER I

FIRST OFFENCE

Curfewed at nine, 'twas beddy-by time,
Before my early teens,
Bundled off to my perch in the loft,
Where darkness ruled supreme,
No more inclined for a Van-Winkle stunt,
Than the foxy burglar, when out on the hunt.

DON'T wish to infer that my parents were over stern, but they held uncompromising opinions, regards the bringing up of their off-spring, and it was certainly far wiser to fall in with their regime, if wanting easy money for sweets, than expressing a grunt, facing a hard luck proposition the next morning.

Always longed for Wednesday nights, during the spring and summer, lying awake for hours, listening for the coming home of a small band of serenaders, invariably hearing their voices in the far distance, blending to-gether in part harmony, singing some of those old plaintive plantation melodies, with banjo accompaniment. Sweet

and low, their voices wafted through the still night, with that mellow ensemble, that only the open alone conveys. You were enraptured, had you any soul for music, for the approaching effect from distance, gradually creeping nearer and nearer to beneath your window, was simply entrancing, whilst the passing away, until many of the sounds, becoming inaudible, fading into oblivion, left one in a wideawake dream.

Thus my love and appreciation of the Banjo was first enkindled, so completely captivated and infatuated, that it was impossible to forget it, leaving the craving to have a crack at the instrument, a veritable intoxication.

Father loosened up on my 9th birthday, giving me a violin and case. Terrific excitement, couldn't get hold of the bally thing quick enough, began drawing the bow across the strings, but to my amazement nothing happened, immediately thought father had been done. My sister, rather amused at my perplexity, remarked : " Before you can produce any sound you must rub some rosin on the bow hair." Quietly slinking out, got a bit at the iron-mongers, giving the thing a good doing. Later, when having the room to myself, had another go, creating the most diabolical row, bringing forth tremendous loud stamps on the floors above, intermingled with yelps of " Stop it ! Stop it ! " my sister flying into the room with a sorrowful look of consternation, saying : " What ever have you been up to ? " Telling her, hoping for sympathy, only got " Silly Boy ! You want a specially prepared

rosin for that purpose ! ” But how’s a poor kid to know ?

A well known professor was engaged to put me through it, a dear old chap, rather beavered, but very painstaking. He very soon licked me into shape, getting me keenly interested, making such progress that the household gradually became more friendly with my efforts ; in fact, after about nine months, was actually playing Mozart sonatas, my sister accompanying.

At the age of eleven was taken by my teacher to play before Dr. Nightcrick, conductor of the Handel and Haydn Orchestral Society. The Doc. seemed rather amused at the kid’s size, standing in front of him, as he stood sizing me up, but presently said : “ Vill you blease blay sum-ting ? ” So you can guess the nationality. Leading off trying to do my utmost, hadn’t got far when he slipped me a sharp crack over the right hand, with his own bow, instantly yelling : “ Loozen dat wrist.” Can assure you I’ve never played any musical instrument with a stiffened one since.

Afterwards heard the object of this audition was to see if my handling the fiddle was good enough to be made a member of the Orchestra, for was given the Second Violin part of the “ Messiah,” with dad later on taking me to one of the night rehearsals. Was placed in a seat, beside another big chap, both being supposed to read off the same part, with vivid remembrance of feeling mighty uncomfortable, my heels dangling against the top rung of the chair. With the Orchestra starting, bewilderment overcame

me, doing nothing but play in the wrong place, bringing out discordant sounds, perfectly atrocious, being a godsend the Orchestra smothering me.

This Second Fiddle part was a tough proposition for a kid, being most intricate and exacting, requiring endless practising on one's lonesome, but to find a spot in my home without torturing others was a difficult problem. Tried the dining room, but the old cook jibbed, if in my bed room, my poor old grannie soon got ratty, with the last resort, the bathroom, but lor ! no sooner had started when loud thumps rattled on the door, demanding instant desistance, the " Messiah " fantasia seeming to have got well on the nerves of the household. One morning found the part had vanished, and father began sidestepping the rehearsals, so naturally to-gether put the lid on my Orchestral experience.

Shortly afterwards made my debut on the Concert Platform, a friend of father's being anxious for me to play, said he would take me, father consenting. On the evening of the show, mother dressed me up in all my pretties, re-curling my locks, with the friend soon calling. He picked up my fiddle, then grabbing my hand, took me some distance, arriving at a hall, sort of dud theatre, dragging me through the stage door to the artists' room at the back. The room was full of virtuosos, and shortly the show began, my turn quickly coming round. Being led to one of the wings on the side, was immediately shoved on, with my wandering down to the front, letting them have it

unaccompanied. Hadn't played many bars when certainly detected whistles and mow-wows from the galleryites, which impressed me as making a decided hit, so putting on an extra spurt finished amidst loud laughter, yelps, cat calls, and terrific applause. In later years fully realising that on this auspicious occasion "I'd copped the Bird." The Big Hook wasn't invented in those days, or it would have got me early.

At the age of twelve was given a hair cut and sent to a Public School. My spare time seemed now taken up with various sports, and fielding hard driven base balls wasn't conducive to flexibility of violin technique, hence the poor old fiddle began to develop long Rip Van Winkle siestas; besides, my sister being deeply absorbed in her own studies, found little time to devote to accompanying the kid, with it certainly becoming very monotonous parading about the room sawing out fiddle parts alone. Longed to play chords and harmonies, for that section of music by far appealed to me most, but the fiddle to me didn't seem to lend itself well for that purpose.

A whole bunch of us boys congregated one summer evening in the open, one turning up with an old banjo. We got singing songs, the Jo butting in, in a sort of primitive way; the old derelict having only three strings, hence carried a heavy handicap, but my pal got in some quite nice chords now and again, getting me frantic with excitement, the old ague attacking me instantly. After a lot of persuading, got my chum to loan it to me for a couple of

nights, smuggling it into the house, up to my room unobserved, for both Dad and Ma would have had a fit if they caught me with such a torturous thing, after all they'd gone through with my fiddling. Placing a dime under each foot of the bridge enabled me to mute the sound, sitting in my old rocker almost till dawn, trying to ferret out chords in sequence.

The die was cast, resolution made, and carried unanimously that I couldn't exist without a Jo, so then and there made a solemn promise that all easy coins that slipped into my jeans were to be hoarded until sufficiently amassed to purchase something decent. Got strolling all over the show, hunting for shops with specimens hanging in the windows, at last striking one that specialized in this line to some extent, discovering an instrument rather catching my fancy, but not having the needful, persuaded the old gal who ran the show to hold it over for three weeks, for was expecting my school report to land in father's hands, and if it showed up pretty good, was half promised five dollars. Was only scared over one subject, that was German, couldn't stomach it, with its hideous guttural sounds ; in fact, loathed it, becoming impossible to concentrate to work it out. The old professor was a funny old bean, using often to say : " You vos a vool " over my translations, with my noticing him making marks in his book against my name. Knowing full well they must be bad, occasionally sneaked in when the old bird was away to lunch, altering a few fifteens to ninety-fives, hence my

German report was not so dusty after all, and I got the Banjo.

You couldn't compare the homecoming of this new purchase to the Prodigal Son's—no embracing, nor kissing episodes by the family ; in fact, the only pal showing traces of sympathy being the cook; still, with everything agin me, struggled on, making progress, spotting a new chord nearly every day. A close chum also got a Jo, so working to-gether ferreted out as duets most of the comic operas of the period, there being no Jo music published in those days beyond a few derelict, threadbare jigs.

Luckily his family were sympathetic—indeed, most encouraging—so did most of our rehearsing at his show, getting on so gloriously that requests began to flow in to appear in public, mostly little entertainments of the very gentle order. Still, it was experience, helping us no end. There were some mighty funny shows we got mixed up in, principally ecclesiastical shindies and Sunday School Monthlies, where you met some of the most extraordinary folk, some awfully nice, others strange, with a sprinkling of cockerel necked hyps who sang with pathos the hymn books through, and wangled your dibs when dealing.

The success of our publicity set our imaginations moving, deciding at once to enlarge the act, aiming for bigger game, the brain wave that tempted being to frame up a musical stunt, employing various crude instruments. So we constructed violins from empty cigar boxes. "Golly!" Rome wouldn't have burned if Nero had played one of these

Coronas. One string fiddles with broom stick handles, also tin piccolos and a hand bellows, with long rubber tubing connecting, so one could pump one end of the room, with the other manipulating at the tuther. This polyglot assortment eventually proving a huge success, for after working the act well up, tried it on a local snip, going so big that we were asked to appear with the Georgia Amateur Minstrel Society, who were giving a bumper show at one of the theatres, in aid of the Home for Incurables, we being billed as :

Cammeyer & Thompson
Musical Versatiles
in their
Great Symphonic Interlude
entitled
Fun in the Kitchen.

Called such from rehearsing in the one at Billy's house after the cook had flown to roost. Billy's mother got active, slipping to-gether some comical togs, blue seemore jackets, with broad white lappels, brass buttons, red, white and blue striped bags, ruffled shirts with flaming red ties, toning well with our black corked faces, with large red rouged mouths.

The house was crammed, jammed, when the Minstrel show opened, our turn being the birdie posish, about half way down, the rag going up showing empty stage, presumed

to be a kitch, yet the only utensils were our instruments laying about on a large deal table, the back screen showing both door and open window, myself going on to slow chills and fever music, worked by the doms thumper in front ; my actions, roaming about like a raffles, why so, couldn't say, except (as per rehearsal). Then presently spotting the instruments, rush, grabbing a banjo, sitting down not too far off the window, playing " Oh, Genevieve, Sweet Genevieve," and at the sixteenth bar Billy appears at the window, looking in, making grotesque grimaces. Knew he was there by the snickering in front, without looking round—wasn't supposed to (as per)—he greeting me with a saw dust brick, then ducking as I turn shouting : " Go way, you Black Trash," then put on one of Billy's father's old silk hats, with soft wadding round the inside rim to keep it from smothering me, again sitting, started up " Comin' through the Rye." Billy again at the window with long slapstick, knowing he was there for certain, from feminine cries of " Oh ! " supposed to be waving the stick about as if preparing to clip me (as per). Then just as I'm playing " If a body, kiss a body, need a body—" Biff! comes the slap on my topper, burying it over my boke, sprawling me on the floor (as per)—no encores allowed—with that intermingled with shrieks of laughter, Billy jumps in, picking me up, saying " How De?" We then working all our duets, with my climbing on to Billy's shoulders at the finish, playing " Marching through Georgia " on the Corona, while Billy accompanying on

the Jo, parading round the stage, making our exit on the last note.

During my collegiate days chummed up with a fellow-student, named McGinnis, whom everyone called MaGint, Teddy being a hot fakir on the guitar, we getting to-gether, making quite a decent fist of it, and with my inventing a new type of instrument, called "Zither Banjo," enabled me to try out on more ambitious type of music. Our little combination proving such a winner, became in great demand all over the show, giving us many ripping times, meeting and making hosts of friends. We luckily on one occasion running up against Lathom Fish, Vice-Commodore of the New York Yacht Club, and Commodore of the Atlantic Yacht Club, owner of that famous schooner *Grayling*, winning all the coveted cups for scores of years. This sportsman being such a great lover of music, went dotty on our instruments, continually inviting us to his home, ultimately insisting on installing us as permanent members of his Corinthian crew, giving me some of the most exciting and enjoyable experiences in my life, for it was simply yachting de luxe, the waters around New York being ideal for that pleasure, just having it at your door, no fussation in getting afloat. The great event of the year being the N.Y.Y.C. cruise, starting early in August for three weeks, the rendezvous generally being New London, away up Long Island Sound.

It was a happy bunch of Corinthians, numbering a dozen, including the Commodore, all turning up on the morn of

sailing, at the Atlantic Club House, Bayridge, the yacht's gig quietly waiting at the staith to embark the lot. With all on board, kits stored, and anchor weighed, our skipper heads her over the harbour, making for the East River, that vast waterway splitting New York from Brooklyn. Working our way up this busy estuary, amongst the congested shipping, was excitable fun. Ferryboats, Steamers and Tugs saluting either with whistle or siren, passengers waving good luck salutations, many knowing this gallant boat was off once more to test her speed in the great Newport event. Along we glided under the huge white bridge, trusting to strike the right tide, to slip through Hell Gate, without being towed, our hopes being centred in making Glen Cove, that cosy little resort just inside the Great Sound, knowing many telescopes and field glasses would be focussing the horizon, trusting with anxiousness to spot our arrival before the sun went down, wondering if we'd be there in time to give our usual entertainment the same eve, realising we must depart the next early morn. Amongst our party being a famous male quartette, so with the MaGint and myself, with our boxes, could to-gether put up a good show. This fact being firmly established at all the ports we touched, made the boat the most popular in the fleet, other yachts always scrambling to get anchorage close by.

If ever a land skirted transparent fluid can be rightly branded Yachtman's Paradise, Long Island Sound will be the first on the tape. Don't run away with the notion it's

a stream, pond, puddle or canal, being simply a glorious indoor briny, flushing its shores well over two hundred miles, in many spots heaps of same wide, possessing numerous natural harbours and coves along its coast, enterable by most sailing vessels at all times. Its summer popularity is proverbial, having so many picturesque and fashionable resorts bordering on its fringe, with charming hotels and villas, providing its itinerants with every aquatic sport and pleasure imaginable.

Through this flow of silvery blue, the *Grayling* pranced and glided, the flying white wings straining with nervy tension making her pine limbs creak when forcing this graceful nereid by Neptunian winds to creen and lurch on the white caps firmer, piercing the oncoming billows with rhythmical precision, bursting their crests into enravishing spray, vividly suggesting some melodic inspiration, captivating one's imagination with enchanting allegro.

Were the nautical bunch annoyed with such surroundings? We'll ring for the steward! One bell: Help! Two: Cocktails! With everyone on the double. The deck party's pleasures virtually becoming rhapsodical—in fact, reversionary—for long, long spells of absolute silence would only be broken with the helm's dictator giving commands in slightly altering the nymphaean's course; at other times possibly some voice would suddenly creep into melody, gradually and quietly taken up by the others, until the full concerted parts were in action, blending frequently in the softest humming pianissimo, at last

becoming so infectious that both guitar and banjo could no longer resist from joining in the ensemble. Such was my vivid recollection on that long stretch of over a hundred miles to join the cruise at New London, where we arrived about ten, picking up our buoy with good luck, the moon aiding us no end from making bad shots and serious mistakes.

Mab, for once becoming lusory, obsessed no doubt with machinations, must have summoned all the water-nymphs in Christendom, for the harbour at the mouth of America's Thames was simply alive with graceful and beautiful craft, as one first piped his optic around the horizon from the yacht's deck the next morn, perceiving sloops, cutters, schooners, of all grades and sizes up to the luxurious steamer, all riding quietly at anchor, with pennants denoting both name and club, flying from the top-mast's peak, launches, gigs and dingies circuiting in and out amongst this clustered fleet with hulls of various hues, formulating one magnificent aquatic panoramic.

Close by, on our port, rested the old tried war horse, whose beauty of lines will never be surpassed, the very boat that took into her head one day to become a saurian bold, craving for adventure, spasmodically hoisted her canvas, setting course out into the vast oceanic gulf, with nose pointing for Merry England's shores. Simply none other than the World's Famous *America*, looking spick and span, and fit as a fiddle, with her owner, General Butler, on board. It was a charm of delight to focus one's vision

on this noble leviathan, who by her own quiet deeds had created the greatest record in yachting history, by bringing the coveted cup, honourably won, from the old world to the new, where it now anxiously awaits for a speedy return, its stay having been far too prolonged, with a species of apathetic clandestined halo surrounding that can only be dispersed by an honourable departure, landing back on its native shore, with the majority of true sporting Americans hailing with glee the very day such happens, for they unanimously feel it's outstayed its welcome, become stale, wanting a change to revive interest, which will ultimately only do good.

The *Grayling* this morn was looking a perfect dream, awnings stretched from stem to stern, sails incased in coverings, decks polished like a skating rink, with comfy wicker deck chairs aft, the crew arrayed in their Sunday Meeting smartness, the Corinthians in whitest of flannels, callers continuously popping up the landing stairs, paying their respects to the Commodore, curious to hear if he had any news regards the arrival of the *Genesta*, as Sir Richard Sutton's Cup Challenger was expected at Sandy Hook any moment, having crossed under jury rig, to contest the following autumn against the American defender *Puritan*, for the moment she appeared an invitation would immediately be dispatched to join in the Yacht Club's festivities. It was a gala day from morn till eve, the waters alive with fresh arrivals, with small craft flying about, like shoals of pollywogs, the large hotels on both sides of the river decked

out in flags and bunting, packed with guests, majority in full yachting kit, teeming with excitement over the morrow's coming race to Newport.

It's virtually impossible to describe in appreciable text the exquisite picturesque, this wonderful assemblage of America's finest yachts, presented, as eventide came on, with old Luna popping her beak over the eastern horizon, shedding a stream of glittering gold across the watery surface, making well over a hundred mermaids, phantasmalizing like a bevy of silhouettes, flicking from their rigging some tiny light, only visible now and again, as their hulls swayed, remindful of myriads of invisible fire-flies. The *Grayling*! Fairyland afloat, being the only true explicit, lit only with miniature chinese lanterns, casting rainbow shadows on the deck's paraphernalia and personnel, for it was then we gave our promised evening concert, with well over a hundred listeners, lolling about in various craft, hovering around the stern, the night simply perfect, one of dreamy softness, when any sound of musical nature floats over the silent glade, like a vesper vapour, interruptions being almost insignificant, for only occasionally would you hear some sirenic note, or the splashing and dipping of oars in the distance, ourselves carrying on this nocturnal nocturne, till well nigh midnight, when the old serenade of "Good Night, Ladies," quietly dispersed our appreciators.

The homage to the *Genesta* upon arrival at Newport was a recordable sight in the annals of yachting, the Yankee

boats booming salute after salute from their guns, gaily flying Union Jacks from halyards, their English visitor dipping her colours, returning signalled tokens of thanks for the sincerity of her reception, fully realising the extenso of her hospitable welcome, her deck besieged with scores of yachtsmen, clamouring to grasp the hand of her gallant skipper, also keenly interested viewing her graceful lines, wondering if she's a certain cup lifter, followed by the reception to her sporting owner on board the Commodore's yacht the same evening, being the windup of a strenuous day, for to-morrow was the great event of the cruise, the race for the Goelet Cup, given yearly by that millionaire yachting enthusiast, Ogden Goelet, consisting of \$1,000 prize for schooners, and \$500 prize for cutters, to be contested over the ocean course off Point Judith, rounding the Sow and Pigs and Hen and Chickens lightships, actually the acid test for speed and skippership.

The *Grayling's* crew were on the hustle also, devastating her of all surplus gear, davits, boats ; in fact, everything that might prove a hindrance when racing, stripping off her cruising canvas, bending her racing kit, testing ropes and stays, greasing her hull from stem to stern, for it's a ticklish business getting a big yacht of this description into the pink. After breakfast, several of us decided to pay a visit to Ogden Goelet and have a look at the Cups, so off we scuttled in the gig, mounting the Norseman's stairs, found the skipper on deck in happy strain :

" Good morning, Mr. Goelet! Do you remember us ? "

" Let me think ! Why! You're that bunch of land lubbers from that old scow named after some tiddler, aren't you ? "

" Quite right, skipper. Just thought we'd come over and have a peep at the mug, to see if it's worth shaken out canvas for. "

" Don't be too cocksure! You've got a new hot rival in *Sachem*, and they tell me they're going to put it across ! "

" They can get away with all of that they like! They'll be at the Pig Sty when we're at the Chicken Roost, and just you watch it ! "

" Well, Boys, come below and see the prizes ! "

So we all bundled down into the luxurious and spacious cabin to size up the Mugs, and there they stood arrayed on a table at the head of the saloon, gorgeous specimens of Tiffany's finest workmanship and artistic taste, making our hopes of annexing the schooner prize all the keener.

" Well, Boys, what's the verdict ? "

" Magnificent ! Simply great ! We'll make the Commodore's mouth fairly water when we get back. Don't you think you'd better wrap the big 'un up now, and we'll cart it over ? "

" Well ! Think it's best to just let it stand a bit longer, giving the polish a chance to harden. But you'll all be over at the reception to-morrow night, and trust you'll kindly give us your usual concert. "

" We're on for that all right, Skipper ! "

" Well, as you look a thirsty bunch, think I'd better ring for the requisite ? "

" There'll be no sidesteppers, Skipper ! "

So after giving a couple of bottles of the boy a safe deposit, toasting success to the race and the donor's health we skipped into our gig, flying back to tell the Commodore all about it.

Cup morn, a perfect peach, bluest of heavens, dotted with powder puff clouds when the skipper's command rang out to slip moorings, worming our way by short shifts through the network of craft, heading for the Narragansett River on our way to the start, off Point Judith, shoals of other boats joining in the same pilgrimage, presenting one vast armada flocking to Neptuneville, the race contestants carrying every stitch of canvas, the freshening breeze would limit, with scuppers to the leeward buried below water's edge, we mighty busy taking stock of our competitors, namely : *Fortuna*, *Montauk*, *Dauntless*, and that unknown quantum *Sachem*, for shortly all would be scrambling for the weather berth, as the last gun sounded, the Committee's boat already stationed, defining the imaginary line to the adjoining lightship, making us peevish with excitement, watching the antics of the various racers, jockeying in and out, often barely avoiding scraping the fat preparation off each other's hulls, keeping the full complement of Corinthians busy on the aft sheet ropes.

Bang ! went the signal, with clever Captain Terry pinching the *Grayling* clean to weather, putting the blanket formula over our next door neighbour, making his sails wabble and tremor like a tuppenny jelly, as we cut past gaining the initial lead, in the first stretch of twenty miles to windward, with the breeze fast becoming a spanker, still carrying every available wing, diving into the on-rolling breakers, tossing up clouds of refreshing wash, streaming down our decks, giving every lubber a slippery wet perch, our new antagonist finding it impossible to creep into our wind as finely as we were pointing, with the gap between us gradually widening as the mileage was logged off.

On we scampered, tacking first to port, then starboard, never once having our bow crossed at any turn, ticking off the long stretch at a h—l of a pace, rounding the Sow and Pigs a good five minutes before our nearest trailer, when, with wind on the quarter, our balloon staysail broke out, pulling her through the sea's trough, like a worthy Flying Dutchman, making quick rift to the Hen and Chickens, jibbing round, kissing them good-bye, with spinnaker automatically breaking, crackling like a frying sausage, as the crew trimmed it in, pulling her stern off the water's edge, with sharp orders for every soul to hug the aft taffrail, accumulating all available dead weight, to keep her nose from boring.

Away we scorched, switchbacking the creamy white tops, leaving a foaming soap sudgy wake astern, as far as

visibility would allow, spars and stays grunting and straining, almost to the break, emitting crazy, weirdsome sounds the skipper easing her now and again as the wind biffed harder, making her swirl in the angry wash, creening over to almost forty-five, one wondering what hippo-bottom-uppermost was like, through nervy imagination, with suddenly the faintest glimpse of the finishing post far ahead gradually looming up as a certainty.

Barely over a mile to skip, and we had the cup annexed, our grand old craft outpointing and outfooting our opponents with miles to spare, throwing us into ecstatic delight, dancing about with hilarious joy, with caution from the skipper, to desist, for fear of upsetting the compass, yet on we ploughed the white crested seas, crossing the finishing line, alive with craft of every conceivable description, sirens and whistles screeching, handkerchiefs fluttering and waving, the Committee's gun, instantly booming forth, sealing the winner, with Captain Terry shoving her wheel hard to port, quickly throwing the victor's nose clean into the wind, with fluttering, shivering canvas, awaiting the official honour to be delivered, for immediately the officials' gig put off, to hand over the coveted document.

Scores of small craft began surrounding us, shouting all manner of congrats. and quips, which had to be quickly signalled to make room, as our skipper eased the *Grayling* on to her starboard, catching the stiffish breeze, full on the quarter, as we made tracks for Newport Harbour, thor-

oughly happy with the day's adventure, the grand old boat seeming to realise she was still unbeatable on her day, flying past many old scows, as she slipped along, as if they were anchored, orders shortly being issued to house topsails and balloon jib, as we swept through the narrows, making for our buoy.

Shoals of yachtsmen began invading our deck the moment we clipped our moorage, offering personal congratulations to our Commodore, keeping many of us busy handing out the icy bubbly, to toast the glory of the famous racer. The reception aboard the *Norseman*, a crowded-out affair, still managed to render our promised concert ; yet in the old concerted number, "Grandfather's Clock," when the Jo swung in the air, imitating the pendulum whilst flicking the strings, to the words "tick tock," unfortunately caught a waiter's tray of glasses, filled with fiz, sending the lot to smithereens, midst a tumult of cheers and laughter.

Long past the midnight hour, when with the handsome silver mug aboard, our gig started on its homeward journey, the crew themselves wreathed in smiles, confessed having been generously doped with invigorating champoon, it only taking but a few minutes, before rounding up alongside the reposeful hero, the owner for the first time in his yachting experience confused, regards it being his ship, still pardonable after looking so long at amber.

ADELINA PATTI



MADAME ADELINA PATTI

Copyright Elliott & Fry Ltd

CHAPTER II

ADELINA PATTI

ONE afternoon at Doctor Marcy's house on 5th Avenue, his daughter, Mrs. Emma Marcy Raymond, said to me :

" Was dining with Madam Patti last night, at the Windsor Hotel, where she's staying, and told her all about your banjo playing, and she's just crazy to hear you. Will you and Dr. McGinnis come up one evening and play to her and Nicolini ? "

" With pleasure, Mrs. Raymond, for not only should I be charmed with the opportunity, but simply delighted to meet the great Prima Donna, being such an ardent admirer of her wonderful voice ! "

" Well, I'll send word by father this evening, as he's attending at the moment, asking her to state which evening would possibly suit best ! "

After everything had been satisfactorily arranged, the MaGint and myself piled up 5th Avenue one night with our boxes, turning into the Windsor, quickly shown up to the Donna's private suite, luckily finding only Patti, Mrs.

Raymond, and Nicolini present, none of those non-interesters lolling about who continually keep butting in, interrupting and spoiling the entire show. Mrs. Raymond at once introducing the MaGint and self.

The Little Lady with the nightingale vochi was extremely courteous in her welcome, saying :

“ Oh, Mr. Cammeyer ! I’ve heard so much about your banjo. I’m simply dying to hear you play, for I not only adore the instrument, but make a feeble attempt to play myself, so trust you won’t keep me waiting long, will you ? ”

“ Certainly not ! As you appear so anxious, will play at once. Does it make any difference what we select ? ”

“ None whatever ! But you must let me hear some of those old darkie melodies before you leave, for Mrs. Raymond says you have a charming arrangement, and I love old negro tunes ! ”

With that, the MaGint and self unlumbered our instruments, quickly tuning up, with myself mentioning our first effort would be Arditi’s “ L’Ingenue.”

“ Simply love it, Mr. Cammeyer, having often had the Signor play it to me in London, for he frequently conducts when I’m singing there ! ”

So we got away with it, whilst the World’s Greatest sat reclining in graceful pose, getting busy with her knitting.

“ It’s simply beautiful on the Banjo and Guitar. Do play it again ! Don’t you think so, Signor ? ”

“ Quite, Adelina ! I agree with you, it just suits these two instruments, they’re so in equilibrio ! ”

Again getting busy, obliged giving them the second dose, switching onto some of Delibes’ gems from his famous Ballet Music, which seemed equally appreciated ; in fact, the more we played, intenser became the P.D.’s excitement, we next ringing in on the darkie fantasia, only getting to that plaintive song, “ The Corn is Waving,” when detected the Little Lady softly humming the tune, along with us, so popped in a sort of obbligato, letting her voice alone, retaining the melody, when at the close Nicolini remarked :

“ My dear ! You were singing it—beautifully ! ”

“ Really ! Never ! Was I ! Quite unconsciously, assure you. It’s simply exquisite, Mr. Cammeyer, and my favourite ; in fact, never hum it without my eyes sort of moistening ! ”

Then followed an interval with refreshments, the Signor proving an excellent host, being exceedingly affable, not knowing how to do enough for us to make our visit turn out a true welcome, with ultimately the Donna remarking :

“ Will you get one of those banjos like you play made for me, for I most certainly must possess one, as I’m returning to New York in about six weeks, if it could be managed by then ? ”

“ Will endeavour to do my utmost, Madam Patti ! ”

“ Kindly do your best, simply sending it here, marked await arrival. I’ll leave full instructions with the manage-

ment to keep it safely, until my return. Now do kindly play once more 'The Corn is Waving'!"

Which we obliged, the Little One again humming the motive, we then preparing to take our departure.

"I know not how to thank you both enough, for this very great treat, it's truly beautiful! By the way, Mr. Cammeyer, have you ever thought of going to London?"

"Never, Madam Patti! No such idea ever entered my mind!"

"Well, you should! The British people would certainly take kindly to your banjo, fully appreciating it, and if you ever do, and I'm at my home in Wales, you must certainly come and pay me a visit, you'd enjoy the lovely Welsh country!"

"It's extremely kind of you, and should the opportunity ever present itself, should be charmed!"

The Banjo was eventually delivered within the time, with shortly after receiving word from the Prima Donna, expressing her delight over the instrument, looking forward to many happy moments with its association during her travels, feeling certain it would prove a sincere friend, also later on received one or two letters from her secretary, mentioning what a pleasure the instrument was to Madam, feeling anxious to inform me that the progress being made was excellent.

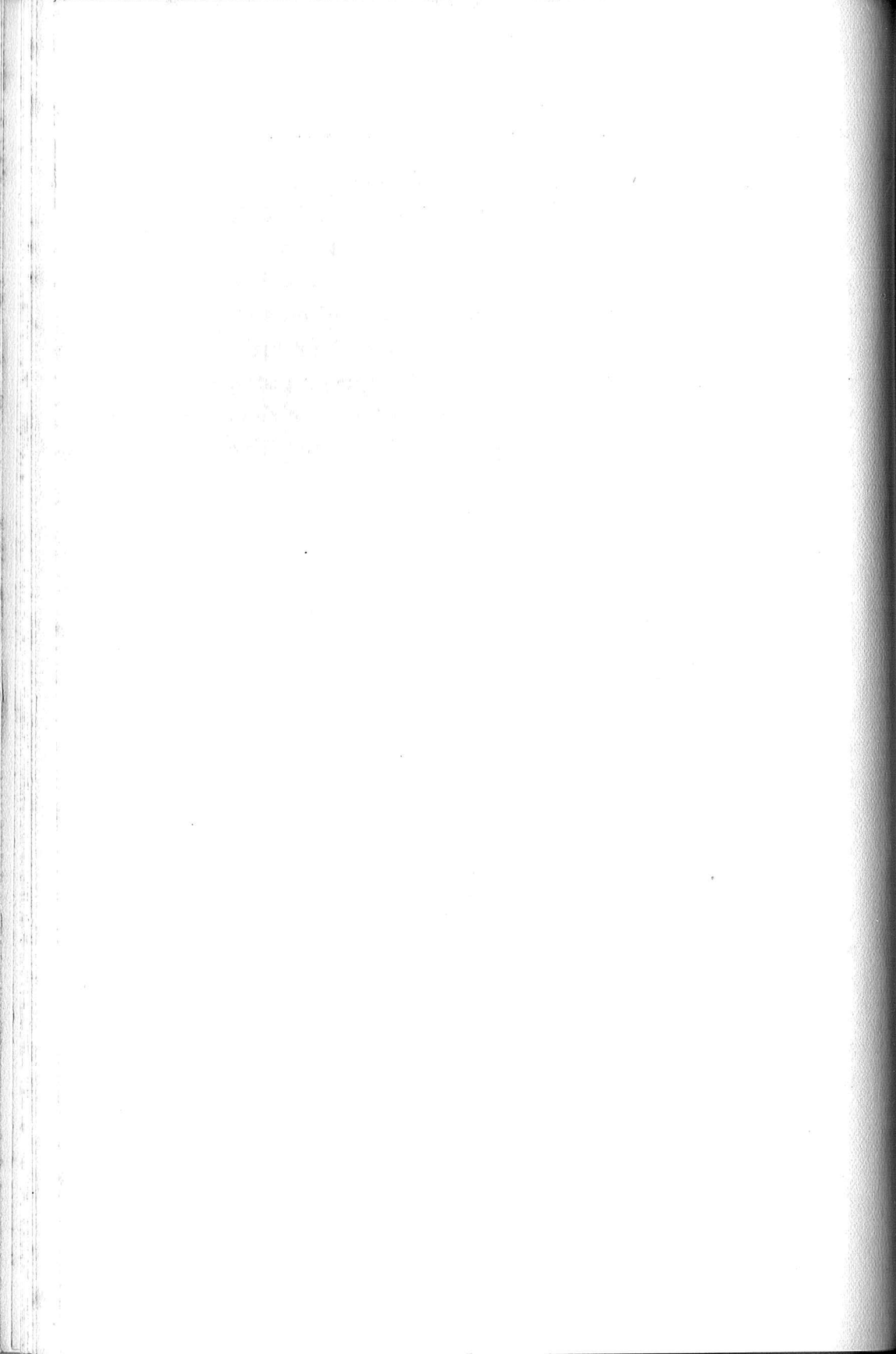
Doubt if many are living to-day who had the good fortune to hear Patti in *Carmen*, for always understood her

appearance in this opera was confined to about a couple of occasions, yet fortunately for myself was present on the only occurrence she favoured the New Yorkers, at the Metropolitan Opera House, and, in my humble opinion, "what a Triumph!" fully realizing the range of the heroine's part is written for mezzo, never once giving such an artist as Patti the chance to display her wonderful upper register, yet her conception of the part, was worth far more than the vocal efforts, proving the greatest bit of acting I've ever yet associated with this character.

The vivaciousness displayed in the second scene, where she enters into the dance with the smugglers, will never fade from my memory, for anything so captivating in portrayal couldn't help but leaving an indelible impression.

The last occasion I had the pleasure of seeing this unique artiste was at Covent Garden, behind the scenes, during that memorable South African War Fund Concert, organized by Mr. Alfred de Rothschild, as Patti had come specially over from America to sing at this occasion, with myself conducting my orchestra.

Naturally there have been many great operatic stars within my time, but Patti to me was inimitable, certainly standing on a pinnacle of her own, although many of the operas she was most successful in didn't appeal to me musically, yet was continually willing to undergo trials simply for the sake to hear one of the greatest vocal organs the world has ever yet known.



EARLIEST IMPRESSIONS OF
RICHARD WAGNER



Richard Wagner.
WAGNER
ELLIOTT & FRY. Copyright. BY BAKERS

RICHARD WAGNER

Copyright Elliott & Fry Ltd

CHAPTER III

EARLIEST IMPRESSIONS OF RICHARD WAGNER

"FOR me music was a spirit, a noble and mystic monster, and any attempt to regulate it seemed to lower it in my eyes." Such were Wagner's own words at the age of sixteen, regards the conception of this wonderful force.

Could any living soul, with such unorthodox vision, be anything but inspired, hence the uttermost distaste he showed to the study of music, on account of its tediousness and dryness, was only to be expected.

Time alone has proved what a tremendous tradition was embodied in the soul of that great genius, having lived, as we well know, long before his time of appreciation, coming under the gruelling conditions of disfavour more than most mortals would ever have the dogged perseverance to combat and survive, filled with constant disappointment and chagrin, he heroically fought on for scores of years, always striving to attain the goal that was constantly denied him.

To think that any mind labouring under all this burden and stress could ever have conceived such astoundingly beautiful ideas, seems beyond human comprehension, continuously driven from pillar to post, with often the want of sufficient sustenance to keep body and mind together, he still thought out the grandest and most sublime melodies the world has ever yet known.

My first experience of coming in contact with his powers was brought about in rather a curious circumstance. Being only a school lad at the time, had a friend several years older than myself, who was passionately fond of good music, who called at my home one evening, dragging me off, quite against my wish, to hear *Lohengrin*.

Arriving at the Opera House, unfortunately found every seat sold, eventually securing standing room back of the Circle, with all doors closed and fastened, before the Prelude began, allowing no one to enter and disturb the audience during the rendition of this exquisite overture.

It's quite beyond my powers adequately to describe the spell that suddenly transfixed me, the moment the orchestra started, the fiddles passionately yet tenderly disbursing such an ecstatic fusion of melodic sound, as embodied in that noble theme of the Swan, left me standing with closed eyes, moistened with emotion, completely entranced under the ensemble of such glorious beauties of tone and labyrinth of symphonic harmonies, never in my life before having experienced being seized with such incantation by some obscure force.

Upon reaching home, laid awake, completely bewildered, endeavouring to fathom this new mysterious mystic, for what I'd recently passed through was new life to me, regards music, seeming so utterly different to anything else ever listened to before, as my opportunities of hearing the best hadn't been neglected, for my parents kept continually taking me to various symphony concerts, but still must confess nothing had ever touched the spot like this dose of Wagner and the flame to hear more instantly enkindled.

It wasn't an easy matter in New York during the 'seventies to hear much Wagner, for not only were his works so little known, but the adequate orchestras capable of rendering same with due justice being non-existent.

Dr. Damrosch, who fortunately was not only a friend of Wagner's, but an ardent disciple, emigrated to America around the 'eighties, beginning immediately to enlighten the public, meeting with conspicuous success, having organized an efficient muster of musicians, started playing many of the great master's early works, with myself well remembering taking every available opportunity to listen, never forgetting that impressive Memorial Concert, given three days after Wagner's death (1883).

Later on, when the Metropolitan Opera House was being erected, the idea of catering for Wagnerian performances was carefully studied and thought out, with ample space being provided to install the full complement of orchestral

players, namely 120, as the composer always scored for, ultimately resulting in many glorious and magnificent renditions of the *Ring*, *Tristan*, and *Meistersinger*, being given under Seidel, supported by the pick of Germany's greatest artists, also after my coming to London derived many opportunities of hearing all these works at Covent Garden, well remembering the De Reszkes, Van Rooy, Ternina, Saltman Stevens, with Richter conducting.

Consequently, now desire to enlighten my readers how it transpired that this autographed photograph of the greatest of all musicians the world has ever known, according to my own humble estimation, came to be reproduced in this book.

At the age of fifteen an enthusiastic young lover of music, named Edward Dannreuther, left America for Leipsig to study this art seriously, and during his sojourn of four years in Germany not only became acquainted with Wagner's music, but the composer himself, resulting in a mutual friendship springing up between them.

Instead of returning to America upon completion of his studies, Edward Dannreuther settled in England for the rest of his life, becoming the champion of this new life music in London, where he founded the Wagner Society in 1872, so it came about when Wagner visited London for several weeks (1877) he made his home with Edward Dannreuther, and believe, during this visit, read the libretto of *Parsifal* for the first time; and of the photographs taken of this illustrious genius, those

that were autographed remaining in the Dannreuther family.

Having the enjoyment of Sir Sigmund Dannreuther's friendship, son of the late Edward, have naturally heard many interesting things regards Wagner, whom Sir Sigmund only remembers very indistinctly, having been taken as a mere child into the breakfast-room, being smiled at, and patted on the head by the great musician.

Sir Sigmund being a devout Wagnerite, we frequently have had many little confabs over the numerous works this gifted brain gave the world, and knowing how fervently attached I am to the same creed, mentioned one morning, whilst strolling to-gether across Hyde Park, that he might possibly later on be able to give me an autographed photograph, which nearly caused my losing my hide, nothing more transpiring, or being said, for some little time, until one morning, when travelling up to town together, he quietly handed me the original of what you observe reproduced here, and it is beyond words to express how I treasure this priceless possession.

It is extraordinary how so many people who have never even heard any of this wonder music delight in deriding its fame, broadcasting what has been written as mere noise, all such abuse generally emanating from pure ignorance and hearsay, proving not only wicked, but terribly sad, having all this unnecessary calumny circulating, doing an enormous amount of unjustness and harm, not only to the greatest man power of the twentiethth century,

but putting off many lovers of emotional music from coming in contact with a new force that might possibly stimulate their thoughts and mind, beyond calculation.

Many years back had an old friend who virtually knew nothing about serious music, although professing to sing a bit, who was continually pulling my leg over Wagner, telling me "It's a well-known fact that his music was the ruination of more good voices in the world than all the other composers put together."

When he first started this irritating little game used to make me a wee bit hot, consequently leading to unpleasant arguments, but after a while gave it up, considering it wasn't worth the breath wasting ; still, for all that, he never let an opportunity slip by to have a crack at me.

One sultry sunny afternoon we happened to be leisurely strolling across Hampstead Heath, when suddenly came within reach of the sounds emanating from the band playing in the distance, the flow of melody wafting over this beauty spot, reaching our ears in rather mellow sweetness, with presently my companion remarking :

"Cam, what a beautiful thing they're playing !"

"Yes, Gerry! It's quite good !"

"Good be damned ! It's the most beautiful thing I've ever heard ! You don't happen to know what it is ?"

"It's the 'Star of Eve,' from *Tannhäuser*."

He never mentioned Wagner again to the day of his death.

HENRY WARD BEECHER

CHAPTER IV

HENRY WARD BEECHER

EVER since the days when the moccasined Braves perched on the porch of Fenimore Cooper's shanty, tossing whether Pocahontas should still continue on Fire Water, or put a dollar on the White, there have been many illustrious escutcheons emblazoned on the time tablet of Old Glory, depicting the noble endeavours of dutiful sons, who loved and adored their native soil.

It's certainly a long age since little Georgie, imbued with juvenilistic mischievous adventure, got toying with miniature hardware implements, embarking with inquisitive devilry on the texture of bark, professing immunity from the delinquencies of fib, feverish with childhood's imagination, developed by stock with the proudest instincts, this tiny seedling from the nursery of Sulgrave Manor ultimately broadcasted a few echoes over the hillsides of Moist, never again Parched, that penetrated the hearts of every loyal subject with indelible pride.

But afterwards came others, amongst the bunch being Henry Ward Beecher, orator, preacher, and Sunday-school teacher. Don't profess to possess much knowledge regards

this renowned personality, knowing nothing about his ancestral antecedents, but would like to gamble my last dollar on their being amongst the bon voyages who sucked lemons on the deck of the notorious *Mayflower*.

Henry Ward came into my existence during my youngster elysium, having been dragged to hear him dispense on the susceptibilities of youthish devilment, telling his large congregation of nippers many kind and delightful home truths, helping to reinforce the well behaved blood corpuscles to get a half nelson on the naughty ones, sending me away, fumbling the loose coppers in my jeans, fully determined with Christian spirit to hand over to some poor unfortunate wretch, with the devil collaring me half way home, blowing the lot on a banbury pie.

When slipping on years, contracted political itch, causing such irritating excitement over one Presidential Campaign, although barred by age from eligibility to cast, found myself jammed in a huge crowd, listening to Henry Ward, putting it across for the party he sided with.

Although it seems as long ago as when Noah took his Zoo up the river, the optical vision of H.W. on the deck of the Brooklyn Opera House is as clear in my mind as my first baptismal with Dad's slipper.

I'll never forget that rivulet flow of powerful words, linked to-gether with such eloquent rhetoric, reminding me of Woodrow W., and the great English Arthur J., at their best, with the snappy touch of L.G. forming in my estimation for ever afterwards a sincere reverence for this remark-

able orator, little dreaming at the time I'd ever be lucky enough to creep into his presence.

Well, I did ! And it happened thus !

Running against the MaGint one day, he yelluped :
" Hollo, Dick ! What doing Friday Night ? George Seney wants us to bring the boxes round to his place. Dove's got a bunch of her gal pals coming ; amongst them that raving beauty, Kate Beecher, the most wonderful blonde you ever saw."

Knowing the Doc's weakness on that shade, for he'd always toss in the sponge when up against pearly white mollars and yaller hair.

" All right, Teddy ! I'm on ! " and there we mustered, playing them dizzy with everything in our rep.

Miss Beecher was certainly some beaut ! and about one of the nicest, level talking feminines I'd ever come up against, seeming immensely taken with the Jo, expressing a crazy desire to learn, with at last prevailing upon us to promise to come to her home the following Sunday week, and surprise Grand Pa, for he simply loves the guitar and banjo, often relating little incidents regards hearing them during his travels amongst the darkies in the South.

It was a cheery group, sitting around that supper table in Henry Ward's home, the great preacher having not yet returned from evening service, but we hadn't long suspense, shortly hearing the lock click, in strolling the noted Divine

who upon immediately being introduced to, sits down, joining in the fun, amusing us with many witticisms, fast becoming the live spark of the party, his manner possessing such magnetic exuberance, interspersed with epigrammatical remarks, certainly requiring a magician to tackle him on philosophical facts, simply being pure delight, peacefully reclining, listening to his remarkable phrasing.

H.W., naturally, hadn't the least notion what was to transpire, his grand daughter having kept it apparently dark, for leaving him still at the table, the younger generation strolled into the front room, the MaGint and self quickly getting busy with the boxes, promptly inducing the Divine to follow suit, throwing himself into an easy-chair, remained listening with chin resting on hand, seemingly intensely interested, while we played several numbers, when Miss Beecher says :

How do you like that, Grand Pa ?

Beautiful, my dear, I love the music from guitar and banjo ! Mr. Cammeyer ! The banjo is a wonderful reposeful instrument, full of soul, its distinctive quality of tonal colour being in such keeping with the associations we are accustomed to hearing it amongst, for during my various sojourns amidst the homes of the darkies I've frequently heard it under conditions, when its plaintive sounds veritably pleaded to one.

It's quite delightful, Mr. Beecher ! to hear such appreciation, especially from yourself !

I sincerely mean it ! You don't happen to play any of the old darkie melodies ! Do you ?

We'll play you some, with pleasure !

So got busy with our Southern Medley, ringing in Old Black Jo, Goin' back to Dixie, Corn is Waving, etc., with the Reverend carefully noting the various barber shop harmonies we kept tossing in, especially in Swanee River, treating the subject differently on each repeat. This certainly appeared to appeal to our distinguished listener, far greater than other things played, with the result that we promised him faithfully to come round another Sunday eve, very shortly.

On another occasion after playing, Henry Ward, addressing me, said :

It's proposed by our Committee at the Church that Harry Rowe Shelley, our organist, should give a series of Recitals, and it has just occurred to me that you boys with your instruments would make a delightful break in the programmes ! Would you be willing to play ?

Nearly left my hide on the carpet, at such an opportunity, couldn't butt back quick enough, saying :

Only too delighted, if your Committee allows it !

Do you happen to know Mr. Shelley ?

Yes, Mr. Beecher ! I've only lately been studying harmony with him !

I'm certain Shelley won't have any objections, but will have a chat with him, also bring the question up at our next board meeting !

Was simply bursting with excitement, when leaving H.W.'s that night, wondering how it would all pan out, fearing naturally some dissenting party would jib, putting the lid on the scheme, for, to me, it appeared far too good a chance to ever click, being absolutely unique, to ever derive the opportunity of performing from the pulpit of the most famous church in America, seemed incredible, wondering when I'd awaken, convinced it was nightmare.

In less than a week, received a letter from the Chairman of the Committee, requesting a call, and did, he reiterating all H.W. suggested, which the Committee had decided to carry out, Mr. Shelley, also being agreeable, the dates having been set as follows, giving me a list, also pointing out, that Mr. Shelley would make two breaks in each recital, which my turn was expected to fill.

Flew round to tell the MaGint the final decision, making his crop jump up like a porcupine's. When the Press broadcasted both adverts. and paragraphs, it caused all sorts of curious discussions, mostly that H.W. and his bunch had gone dotty, letters appearing in the papers from eminent musicians and clergy, endeavouring to plead to the Committee's good sense, to act quick enough, to avoid placing both the church, and the status of the glorious

organ, in such an infradigue position, some going so far as to suggesting it bordered on blasphemy, polluting the art of music.

With this avalanche of oafish cant, one or two on the Board unfortunately contracted cold feet, but H.W., the Chairman, and even Shelley himself, remained adamant, turning a deaf 'un on this crankish bombardment, fully realizing at the same time, it was the finest ad. the show could possibly have, and so it proved, for the box office ticked up big audiences, many turning up out of pure curiosity.

The Recitals ultimately went off quite to H.W. and the Committee's satisfaction, with the Press giving long detailed accounts, praising the instrumental items, commenting they lent contrast and relief to the main feature.

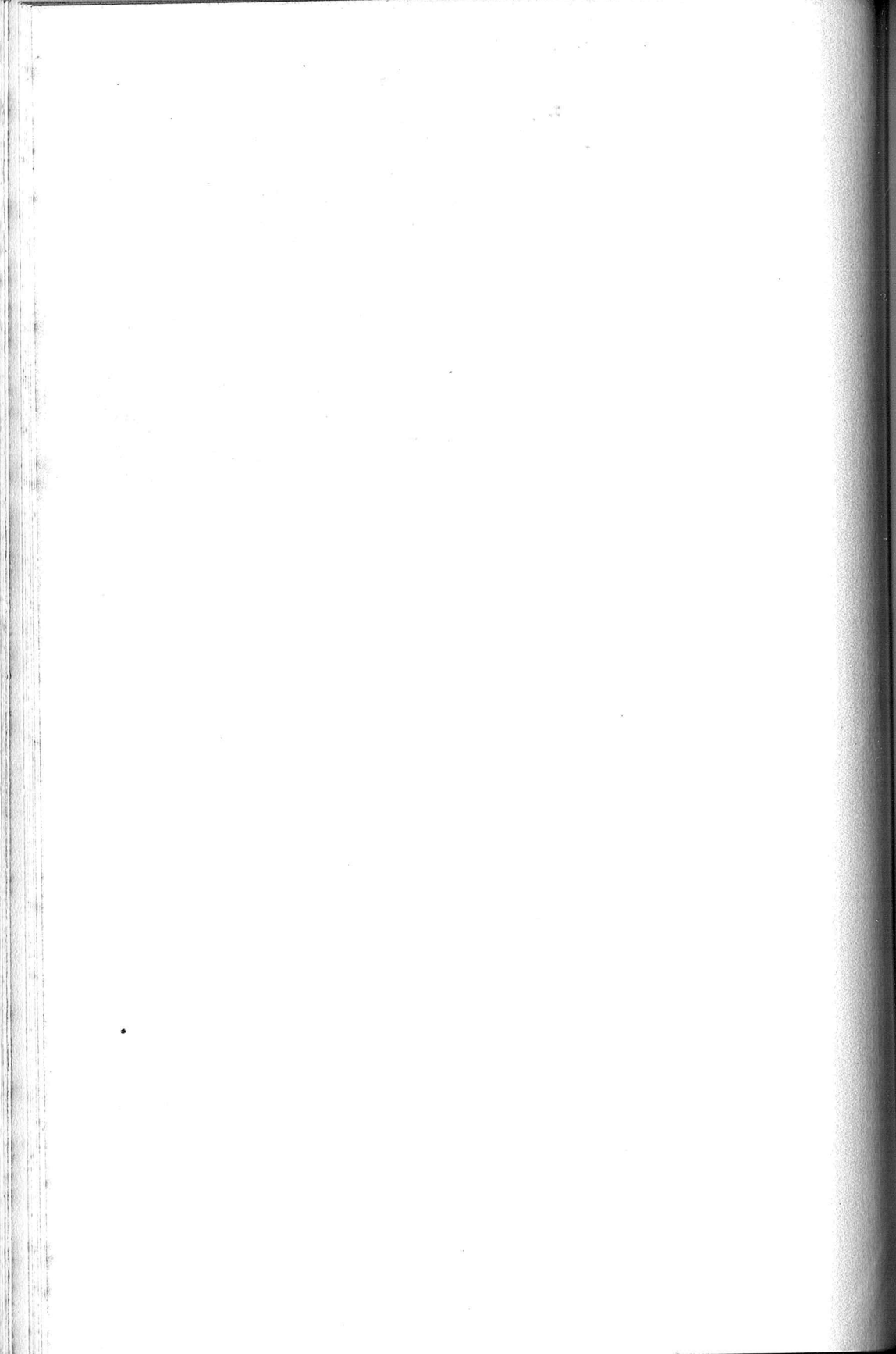
Grant such a bold venture was a ticklish move on the part of Henry Ward, but such was one of the delights in his character, for once he'd weighed a thing up, he never lacked the incentive to move. It was without doubt a remarkable nature, with myself only seeing a tiny ray of it, yet realized the invincible power behind it all, interspersed with kindness, justice, and devotion to the very core.

There are many living in this country to-day, whose memory of his words and deeds are tempered with veneration, and every true Yank doffs his head covering with respect, knowing alone what he did for his coloured brethren during the time of America's Abraham ! For if any human being has won his award, it's Henry Ward !

THE JOURNAL OF THE
ROYAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

VOL. 10, PART 1
1980
PUBLISHED BY THE
BRITISH ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY
LONDON

BON VOYAGE



CHAPTER V

BON VOYAGE

Was having a bust up at Jimmie Potter's one night, a bunch of Jo enthusiasts having assembled, when during supper, Jimmie's wife (the famous Mrs. Brown Potter), sitting beside me remarked :

Have you ever thought of going to England ! for the London Season ?

No ! Never once given it a thought ! rather a coincident though ! Patti having mentioned the same !

Really think London Society would appreciate your style of playing, with the possibility of considerable work !

When's the best time ?

Early Spring, the Season beginning in May !

With that the trend of converse changed, actually thinking nothing more about it, for was quite busy with both public and private work around New York, besides occasionally running off to Varsity towns and other cities.

One evening whilst playing at a private musical at Professor Doremus's house in Madison Avenue, ran against the celebrated Doust Sisters, duettists on the dominoes, who had recently come over to storm America, and upon being introduced, also mentioned the London idea, with Mrs. Doremus chiming in, saying : " If you do decide on going, be sure and let me know, for can assist you with personal letters to several of the Society leaders."

Whilst staying out on Orange Mountains with my friends the Heckers, one evening during dinner, mentioned the subject to my great friend, about venturing across the puddle, to have a slap at Old London, meeting with rather a good reception, from his quarter, advising me to make my plans a long way ahead, so there and then finally determined to have a run out for a few months at least.

Must give a public recital before slipping away, for every fakir, ere taking a sea journey, always works off the farewell benefit stunt, having known some to carrying on the absolute last appearance weeze, well over a score of years, so engaged the Berkeley Lyceum, booking a couple of warblers to assist, the show ultimately proving a huge success, having previously sold all the boxes and best seats to pals and friends, with a decent sprinkling of the general public as well turning up.

The stage looking a veritable picture, for George Hecker, knowing how fond I was of his music room, at his home on the mountains, stripped it, carting all the Persian rugs, hangings, standing lamps, etc., down to this little fairy

theatre, decorating the interior setting to almost a facsimile, with many congratulations cropping up, commenting on the artistic hand that had been at work.

An exceedingly hot wind-up shindy was scheduled for my last night in the old berg, friend Hecker insisting on reserving that date entirely for his edification, requesting me to invite fifteen of my best pals, to partake of a send off, in the form of a midnight banquet at his town house, never forgetting that extenuating session, starting with quietly dining with the Heckers, followed by a box at the theatre, returning to shortly welcome the arrival of my chums, they quickly blowing in, undoubtedly put up to the little game of trying to get me well corned before the banquet opened, for up they sauntered, saying: "Well, old bean, now as you're just going to buzz off! What about a last little nip to-gether?" Pulling me gently towards the enormous punch bowl with an iceberg floating in the middle, but having encountered this course before, well remembering how it played me out with getting too easy, on a former occasion, for once had the fortune to spot mine host, concocting this slippery gargle, that goes down like treacle, but spreading like fire, for the contents were some private receipt, embodying about every conceivable drop of hooch tabled in the boozeacopœa.

The supper table presenting a most striking picture, exquisitely designed, and artistically laid out, the centre piece being the parting gift from my host and hostess, comprising an elaborately decorated basket, holding the

choicest fruit, flowers, and a dozen of the boy, the gormandizing ceremony beginning with various out of season delicacies, with long intervals between courses, for nicotine and chatter, eventually coming to a close well nigh four in the early, for then the good-bying episodes began, myself being accused by my hostess of crying, the kind soul being entirely disillusioned, being quickly corrected, that it was neither crocodile nor natural tears, simply fizz oozing from my peepers.

A 5th Avenue Stage Coach was drawn up, waiting to take the small contingent, who insisted on escorting me to the steamer, guaranteeing to lay me safely to rest in my allotted berth, so after the usual hand shaking palaver, the firing party galloped away, landing at the Cunarder's wharf just on the break of dawn, myself not remembering much that followed, being done to the wide, but have scant recollection of being hiked to my dugout, the rest of the bunch following in, awakening a fellow sleeping passenger in the bunk below, insisting in jocular coaxing, upon his joining the gang in more fresh bubbly, which he took kindly to, in a most good natured spirit.

Rather a remorseful awakening, with the usual discomforting ailments following the indulgence of such escapades, unconsciously must have muttered some moan, for instantly overheard a voice say :

Wull ! How you feelin' !

Prithee ! Be silent ! Are we on the Scenic Rail ?

Nope ! The Water Chute !

Have my bunch gone ?

Long ago ! We've passed Old Coney ! They were a cheery lot, one kept on complaining the ship's brass looked dull, giving the sailors two dollars a time to polish up, another forced me into shifting two huge heapers of fiz !

Did I have any ?

Forget it ! They hoisted you up at last !

Did they, the brutes ! I've got some damn thing gripping me round the body !

That's a life belt ! They feared you getting water-logged !

A steward shortly came to the cabin, before I was up, with a message that the purser would like to see me at my convenience, in his office, leaving me wondering all sorts of things, as to whether some of my gang had committed some misdemeanour, before quitting the ship, he calling me to account, so hurriedly got toggged, ultimately finding his sanctum, when he extending me a most cordial shake, quite relieving my anxiety, mentioning he was pleased to greet me, also saying that he'd received a chit from young Vernie Brown of the firm of Cunard's Agents that myself was a passenger on the *Umbria*, and to kindly look after my comfort.

Which he certainly did, at once transferring all my chattels to a most luxurious cabin, suggesting, you'll

possibly be much more happy and comfortable here. Was also lucky on treading the main deck in running against three other friends from New York, who seemed darn glad of the meeting, if only to make the fourth for cards, we likewise arranging our seats to-gether for meals.

The usual Thursday Night Concert being held, at which performed, afterwards making the acquaintance of an English Pro., returning from America, who enlightened me with numerous tips on London, one being to be sure and look up George Ashton at Mitchell's Royal Library, as he was the crackerjack agent for private engagements.

The final morning on board turned out gloriously sunny with a freshening breeze, as we skipped up St. George's Channel, at a hottish pace, trusting to make the Mersey, just after lunch, my room became crowded with ship friends, cleaning up the balance of the Heidsieck, for it was useless attempting to show such stuff to the customs, and it didn't take long to make dead-uns of what remained, putting us into high glee, to piling onto the tender, which gave us a good soaking outside, in ploughing through the angry wash, occasioned by the tide and wind wanting to move in opposite directions, but peaceful enough when striking the landing stage, where we clambered off doing Indian file into the customs.

FIRST TOUCH OF LONDON

CHAPTER VI

FIRST TOUCH OF LONDON

HOW I BOUGHT IT TWICE IN ONE DAY

WITH my luggage safely snuggled in the Station Hotel, knowing the London train wasn't leaving till well after five, considered it a sacred duty to purchase a Topper, having been frequently put wise, one was marked as a Hoo-Doo, if ever appearing on the London streets minus same, besides pictures in America portrayed Englishmen playing cricket so adorned, also School Kids almost smothered in them, in fact the Topper was the vogue in those days.

Running across a decent looking shop, quickly got fitted into the latest shape, satisfying my vanity, that now it was all clear when introducing my proboscis to little Old London Town.

Returning to the Station, found my friends had secured a Saloon Carriage, also ordered dinner baskets at Crewe.

We played a gentle game of poker on the way up, so passing away the time, with fortune favouring my cleaning up, not only the price of the Topper, but three eighteen

MADE AND PRINTED IN ENGLAND BY
HENDERSON AND SPALDING LTD
AT THE SYLVAN PRESS
SYLVAN GROVE
LONDON
SE
15

besides, putting the kitty in an optimistic chuckle, at the first go off.

Reaching London about ten, was soon buzzing along in a growler to the Metropole, finding it a most inviting proposition, when slinking into the foyer to sign on.

A porter grabbing my grip and jo-case, saying: "Any other luggage!" sizing me up with a suspicious glance, when told nothing else, possibly wondering if this fresh guy was one of those hotel dodgers that occasionally infest such abodes.

After being shown my allotted space, rubbered round the various rooms and lounges, ending up in the spacious smoking room, lit a cigar, before casually picking up a Guide of London, issued by the hotel.

Glancing through, the very first picture gripped me, being Nelson's Monument, Trafalgar Square, clearly recalling my studies of English history, with remembrance that the Admiral wasn't half a bad old salt, in fact a mighty darned good one, for he alone put the lid on all those fussy gazekas, imbued with such domineering conceit, thought it as easy to plank their feet in the Old Country as munching sponge cake.

Noticing this famous historical monument was only a stone's throw away, decided on paying my respects to "Nels" in the morning.

When chaps leave their native shores to traverse foreign climes, they naturally consist of various vagaries, regards cranium aptitude, generally including two very pro-

nounced specimens, the one who carries a hammer to knock holes in everything and everybody, for no place could possibly exist on the map equal to the burg he hails from, continually trying his utmost to push all big towns out of shape, condemning trains, transit, boarding houses, hotels, and fried fish shops, to every stranger he meets, for when asked by the native how he likes their old show, belches forth an harangue that it's a century behind the almanac, and slower than a microbic gorgonzola, endeavouring to break the road record from London to York.

Now the other is directly the opposite, for he bursts forth into the environment with a smile on his jib, fully resolved to make good at every step. Encountering an intelligent individual, butts in with :

Pardon, Stranger ! What's that building there ?

That's the Abbey !

Gee ! Some Structure ! Pity they tarred it !

That's not tar ! That's old age !

Indeed ! How old, by the way ?

Over a thousand years !

Great Yellow Dog ! Just think ! Built before America was discovered ! Wonderful ! Good Old Beef and Yorkshire ! Knocks the stuffing out of Pork and Beans.

Now presume both these curios were to go and say Howdy to Nelson ! The first would probably lead off with :

Suppose that's his Nibs, on the roof ! What-oh ! You blithering Old Sea Dog ! What price ! Lady H—— ! (never letting up on the hammer).

But the tother would immediately test his vochi, doff Hamburger, politely letting it go, with :

Cheerie-oh ! Nelsy ! You're certainly the goods, Old Sport ! Didn't half put it across those blinking Frog Eaters ! Did yer ! Pity the coves, when erecting your perch, didn't leave a few loose bricks behind, so when those Bolshi Dagoes beneath get ranting the Red Rag, trying to break down what you strived so damn hard to build up ! You could just toe a few off onto their craniums ! A lucky hit or two would do a power of good !

Monday morn ! My motto ! strictly business, decided on ferreting out Mr. Ashton. Getting a tanner's worth of extra shine on my topper, strolled with chesty nonchalance outside the hotel, endeavouring to appear as near being a London habitat as deception would allow. The gayly uniformed Curber, instantly spotting me, saluted :

Hansom, Sir !

If you please !

The shrill of the whistle, soon yanking one off the rank, my hardest proposition being, utmost endeavours to conceal the American hall mark.

Where to, Sir ?

33 Old Bond Street !

Cabby ! 33 Old Bond !

A flick of the whip, and off we flew, myself wondering if the Cabby had actually got me. It was certainly a most interesting experience, for traversing virgin ground is always exciting. We sped along past "Nelsy," my eyes ever busy trying to take in twenty sights at once, winding into Waterloo Place, passing large clubs and stores, crossing a congested area, bending into a long curving thoroughfare, named Regent, teeming with traffic, pedestrians moving in all directions, beautiful shops with windows displaying everything a Croesus could desire, shortly crossing another big opening, heading straight on, towards a large church, swerving slightly upon reaching into a magnificent wide avenue called Portland Place, wondering if it was named after the Lock Up or the Cement, nearing the top, went bang into a beautiful park, with palatial mansions, facing onto.

Along we trotted, passing nursemaids wheeling prams, full of the new generation, merry kids dancing about like kittens at their sides, well dressed people strolling and sitting midst artistically laid out flower beds, containing every plant and bloom in the horticultural catalogue, green fields with youngsters playing all sorts of games, presently going by a Gate House, labelled Zoological Gardens,

beyond coming to fine estates, and ultimately an ornamental lake, with ducks swimming about.

What a wonderful place London is, thought I, nothing in New York to touch it, although there's the famous Central Park, framed in Skyscrapers, but here's all this simply going from Trafalgar Square to Bond Street, charming in fact, for the natives, frequently making this journey, with such delightful surroundings, began to feel having made a bloomer in selecting the Metropole as a put-up, considering most of my business (if striking lucky) would emanate from Bond Street, for such long journeying, a few times a day, mighty severe time wasting.

Clearing the park, dodging through various streets and thoroughfares, eventually pulling up in front of Mitchell's Royal Library, so designated by window lettering.

Squaring Cabby, setting the exchequer back five and six, pushed through the door, strolling towards the desk, enquiring if Mr. Ashton was connected with the business, answered affirmatively, handed over my card, kindly requesting an interview, with presently a side door opening, with a signal to enter, a gentleman immediately arising, saying :

What can I do for you ?

Your name, Mr. Ashton, was given me on the steamer, as a provider for private receptions, my object being to try my luck in such quarters, wondering whether we could do any business to-gether !

What's your specialty ?

Playing the Banjo !

Afraid there's very little prospect for such an instrument, it's solely confined in this country to race meetings, music halls, and minstrel shows ; besides, people giving private parties might take offence at my suggesting such a thing, hence I'm rather reluctant, regards taking the risk !

My Banjo, Mr. Ashton, is quite distinct from any other, possessing more refined and musical tone, my repertoire including well known drawing room music. It was Mrs. Brown Potter and Adelina Patti who suggested my coming to London, feeling convinced my style of playing might probably appeal to society, eventually leading to recognition. Will you kindly grant me the opportunity of showing you my banjo, just letting you hear same, then judging for yourself, and if not too busy to-morrow, would willingly bring it round !

To-morrow, unfortunately, I'm fully occupied, to-day in fact would be better ! By the way ! Where are you staying ?

At the Metropole !

That's only a few minutes from here !

You don't say that ! Why ! It's taken me almost an hour by hansom !

Ah ! Cabby's put it across, sizing you up for a mug, driving you all round the map, chancing being found out !

You mean, I've actually bought it !

Afraid you have !

Well, that's one up to him ! felt all along they were on to me, still if you will allow me to pop down and fetch my Jo, will be back in a jiffy !

Go ahead ! I'll wait !

Not more than twenty minutes elapsed before my banjo was shown, also a demonstration of its possibilities, which by the interest taken, conveyed the impression as having made good, for presently was informed a note would be made of my act, with a view to securing engagements.

He also said, you might like to take in the theatre this evening, handing me a private box for the Vaudeville, to see the Thornes in Joseph's Sweetheart. Thanking him for such extreme kindness and courtesy, bade good morning, passing out feeling quite bucked at the result of the interview, deciding on Dri-Peding it back, chancing no more circular tours.

Too much hotel hugging soon gets me on the neurasthenic list, continually hearing yelping call boys from morn till night, rubbing against the same breed, that you've done for moons, on 5th Ave., Long Isle, and Tuxo, hastily brings on fidgityitis, which must be side tracked. Out amongst the bourgeois for me, quick, having finished my morning job, rest of the day, adventure, instantly buzzing off, determined first to appease the inner-man.

Happily struck a quaint little crib in Parliament Street,

with sandy carpet and nixy linen, where served a delicious chop and baked.

Sitting opposite a kindred dietetic with whiskerines of yellowish nuance, who when invited to join in a bev., quickly acquiesced, and over tankards of refreshing beer, related a lucid kaleidoscopic résumé of England's history, from Queen Bess to Gladstone.

Once more in the sunshine, feeling bonny, wandered towards Trafalgar Square, hitting it where the bone shakers stopped. Up rolled these carriers of humanity, one after the other, with conductors shouting : " This way for Piccadilly Circus ! " Gee-Whiz ! That sounds the goods ! I'm on ! Popping into one, only seeming a few seconds before popped out by the clarion " All out for the Circus ! " Moving back a few paces, planting myself against a shop front, avoiding the surging crowd, securing a clear view of the horizon, began scanning the full panorama, only observing a large open area, with huge masses of moving traffic, surrounded by towering buildings, no signs of any tents nor canvas to be seen anywhere, presuming it must be an indoor show. Just then, a Bobby coming close, tackled him !

Officer ! Will you kindly tell me where the entrance is to the Circus ?

There are several ! Which one do you want ?

The one with the box-office, to book a comfortable scat !

Afraid you won't find many comfortable seats in this Circus !

Aren't there any stalls ?

Only those Flower Ones ! On that sort of island ! Over there in front of you !

Sorry to have troubled you ! Guess I'm on the wrong bunk !

How's that ? Don't seem to get yer !

Wull ! Being a fresh yap from U.S.A. ! hearing the bussies yelping this way for Piccadilly Circus ! Thought it one of those Barnum stunts, with trained elephants, and performing seals !

Now ! Did yer !

And side show freaks ! Such as living skeletons, and bearded ladies !

Oh ! There's plenty of them about !

Say ! Officer ! Guess it's a purchase ! And the second this day ! Many thanks, all the same ! Good day !

Moving away, feeling a consummate ass, thoroughly disgusted with my crassed ignorance, hadn't slinked but a few paces before piping the corner of my eye around, to observe the effect on Bobby.

There he stood absolutely rocking with laughter, and daresay muttering to himself ! They do ship some crazy Yankee Doodles over here ! Piccadilly Circus ! Trained elephants ! Performing seals ! Good Aunt ! What next !

Piccadilly ! Bathed in sunshine, this wonderful afternoon, seemed almost carnivalistic, crowds of well dressed pedestrians packed the side walks, the roadway one endless caravansary, manœuvring east and west. The picturesqueness of this spectacle beyond conception, for as one ventured further, density of both road and pavement intensified, reaching its zenith at Bond Street.

The whole world appeared to have declared a holiday, assembling at this point of vantage, magnificent carriages galore, containing beautifully gowned occupants of aristocratic lineage, reclining with graceful pose, adorned :

In bonnets, ribbons, silks and laces,
and smart parasols, to shade their faces,
Coachmen and footmen, in full dress array,
Resplendent uniforms, with gold inlay,
Undoubtedly, the grandest sight of all,
The priceless horses, fresh from the box stall,
Harnessed in glittering gilt, and silver,
The massive curbs, causing lips to quiver,
Prancing and dancing, with polished skins,
Their forelimbs almost touching their chins.

So this was Old London ! My word ! It would take a clever daring scribe to pen paint vividly this astounding labyrinth of fashion. .

Still obsessed with curiosity, hit across Bond Street, loitering further along old Pic., in fact hadn't gone many paces when my attention became centred on over busy policemen rushing about, waving arms and rolls of rain-proofs, diverting and directing traffic, leaving a wide clear space, the throngs automatically lining up on the curb, like battalions of soldiers, naturally mixing myself in the scrum, addressing a gentleman, standing beside :

Will you kindly tell me ! What's on ?

Her Majesty is coming !

Vicy ?

Yes ! Queen Victoria !

Amidst the crowd's animated excitement, the clatter of hoofs could be distinctly heard, gradually becoming louder and louder, with presently the Royal Party greeted with vociferous cheering, flying by, ladies and kiddies waving their handkerchiefs, gentlemen doffing their cadies !

Wonderfully loyal, you Britishers are to your Sovereign ?

Yes ! That's the stoicism of England !

Quite recognized your Queen !

Did you ! How's that ?

Why ! My mother has a portrait of Her Majesty hanging in her sitting room in America !

You have no Queens in America ! Have you ?

Only card queens ! They being a bit on the tobasco, at times ! When you keep staking in your dibs, against three's and four's of them !

Our conversation continuing merrily, as the crowd dispersed, both unconsciously eager with inquisitiveness, endeavouring to gain insight into each other's respective country.

Don't suppose there's a natty little place handy, where we can just celebrate, Hands across the Sea ?

Why yes ! Excellent idea ! Come this way ! Immediately swinging to the left, taking me up some steps.

Is this a tunnel ! We're entering ?

Oh no ! It's the Burlington Arcade !

First time I've ever struck a street with a roof on it !

Striking me as both weird and curious, yet intensely fascinating on deeper penetration, with the tall shop windows, reaching from floor to ceiling, displaying fashionable and creative articles, artistic to a degree, the long promenade teeming with well dressed men and women, likewise scores of attractive feminine, this miscellaneous assembly, peeping through windows, bustling and hustling, in and out shops, swaying and moving in opposite directions, presenting a distinctive novel picture.

What a busy place ! Everybody seems so deadly keen ! Don't they ?

Yes ! Even the pretty ladies !

We shortly running into daylight again, my companion heading straight across, to the street opposite.

That's a good omen !

What's that ?

Why ! Cork Street !

Quite ! We're going where they're drawn !

Following my courier patiently, was suddenly swerved into a door way with rather a long passage.

What's this place ?

The Blue Post !

Can you get a spiritual drink here ?

Oh yes ! Why ?

Why, Blue tacked onto anything in the way of a bev. in America generally signifies a sort of weak-kneed spray !

Now, Uncle Sam ! What's the christening ?

Pardon ! It's my shout, being my suggest ! By the way, what's the safest, never despair lotion, in these parts ?

Scotch !

Wull ! Make it two !

You informed me your mother had a portrait of our Queen in her sitting room !

Quite right !

Is your mother English ?

Nope ! Welsh !

Have you ever been into Wales ?

Nope ! Only passed through them, coming over !

Our conviviality being shortly over, again passing into the street.

Well ! I'm charmed to meet you. Enjoyed our little old confab no end, trusting when we both strike the itinering mania again, we'll luckily bump against each other ! Good afternoon !

Bon jour !

PUNTING ROUND THE TOWN

CHAPTER VII

PUNTING ROUND THE TOWN

PUNTING about London, simply fascinating, for after interviewing the principal agents, controlling the bulk of private work, there was nothing else to be done, once the seeds were planted, but lie dog-oh, watching their growth, but from all one could fathom, mighty slow fertilization, for can never remember coming up against a greater brigade of pessimists, during all my long summers and hard winters, even after virtually convincing them, they'd an entirely new and novel act to boost, they held out only a baldheaded ray of hope, intermingled with a bunch of excuses, such as "Had it been a harp or mouth organ" bookings might be easier, consequently there was a massive quantity of spare time on one's hands, to work off in seeing the sights.

Fortunately, had a pal from little old N.Y. with me, we to-gether taking many enjoyable long rides, perched on the knifeboards, top of the bone-shakers, carrying you along at only a few miles per hour, making frequent stops of about ten minutes' duration, at various points, principally Pubs, mostly named after Kings, Queens, Princes, etc., often

making us think how flattered these Royalties must feel, for being so highly popular and honoured, still it was great fun, and intensely amusing, unfolding a continuous picture of rural London, being able to see well over the walls of loads of quaint old world places, many with beautifully kept gardens, displaying well shaved lawns, and abundance of floral colourings.

Some of the Drivers of these prehistorics were certainly unique characters, brimful of spontaneous wit and repartee, the way they used to chip other vehicle rein holders, with cross talk and patter, reminding one of the Two Macs, doing a stunt at the Pav., then again you'd hear them jabbering away to their favourite gee-gees, calling them comical pet names, giving at times sidelight into their quaint little traits, and psychology, such proving to a stranger, the acme of pastime.

London at night, in those times, certainly didn't strike me as being over illuminated, for after being used to New York, with all its flashes of brilliancy from electric juice, this old burg seemed somewhat on the gloom, electricity not having yet thoroughly struck the town, none of the theatres being installed, it seeming strangely curious when noticing the gas footlights, as if one had suddenly slid back a few calendars.

Spending most of my evenings at these places, through the excessive kindness of my pet agent, who kept me daily supplied with either a box or a stall, giving me the opportunity of seeing and hearing all that was going on in

theatre-ville, finding many things of great pleasure and interest.

The Old Gaiety in the Strand, when those two great outstanding, and incomparable artists, Nellie Farren and Fred Leslie, held the boards, likewise the public spellbound, when at the zenith of their fame, being pure joy to listen to, absolutely irresistible, so much so, that you found yourself hustling to hear them, time and time again, burlesque being the great vogue in those days, now called revue, possibly because the new up-to-daters think it sounds better, but only wish with all their business acumen they could ferret out talent of the present day, that put across the footlights, one quarter of the genius, that the two above mentioned did, for the lucky will never forget as long as they dodge the undertaker, Nellie Farren's portrayal of the Crossing Sweeper, nor Fred Leslie's whistling Rockaby Baby, On a Tree Top ! he producing such an amazing quality of tone.

The Savoy with its brilliant Gilbert and Sullivan, the Avenue with Arthur Roberts and Phyllis Broughton, Irving and Ellen Terry at the Lyceum, Wilson Barrett at the Prince's in Oxford Street, were all favourite haunts of mine, also the two big variety houses, the Alhambra and the Empire, both given over to spectacular ballets, with other turns sandwiched in, can vividly recall wonderful Dan Leno, dressed as a navvy's old dutch, singing a parody on that famous song of Cellier's " Queen of my heart, to-night," following with his amazing clog dancing, doubt if ever I'd seen anyone so clever and artistic with their feet,

the orchestras at both places being exceptionally fine, comprising about sixty musicians each, with the famous conductor Jacoby at the Alhambra, and Hervey at the Empire.

London in May '88 was the wettest season my memory can ever recall, heavy drenching showers following one another incessantly for days on, hence my poor old topper required the constant attention of the hat doctor to keep up a respectable appearance, this becoming a costly proposition, with the fee of six pence a trip for restoration, convincing me it was a flat's action purchasing the tile in Liverpool, ultimately driving me to procure another locally, deriving the ironing out game for nixy.

Every morning, except Sunday, saw me doing Bond Street, looking in at the various agents, to hear if there was anything moving, but what a delightful promenade in Victorian days, rarely observing any name over a shop, that wasn't decidedly English, windows displaying only the most artistic and finest quality of home made goods and wares, driving home the old adage, that England was then the workshop of the world, now unfortunately the dumpshop, pavements packed with fashionably dressed people, which at some points being so narrow, were more like paths, almost compelling one to go sideways, allowing room for the full skirted damsels to pass, hoops and parrot cage bustles being still in vogue. Lordy ! such a difference to the present, when one can spin along, with never any fear of knocking up against anything off the drapery counter

from the knee downwards, the permanent waves not turning on the hose in the old days, like they do now, the hoofers generally meandering this thoroughfare, being drawn mostly from the élite, distinctly different from the motley one now runs up against, hence it's only with sadness an old invader looks back, witnessing how time has altered a "le beau monde" land mark into a has-been.

When your boots got full of feet, one of the quaintest old retreats to dive into, was Blanchard's in Beak Street, funny old horse-hair settees, also funny old fashioned waiters of the tangled footed persuasion, who served you out about the choicest drop of old malt to be had in the West End, poured into such heavy glasses, almost making you round shouldered in the lifting, but for all that, certainly was a bird of a place, so quiet and peaceful.

Still having those letters of introduction to various society leaders undelivered, thought it about time to get busy, presenting a few, so popping into a hansom one afternoon, started off, calling first at Cadogan Place, on Mrs. Ronalds, fortunately finding this charming lady at home, who luckily became highly interested and enthusiastic over the idea of my banjo, trusting I'd come and play at one of her Sunday Afternoons, seeing no reason why my instrument shouldn't become most popular, being such a distinct novelty, as nothing of the kind had previously been introduced into London Drawing Rooms.

Next driving to Stanhope Street, Hyde Park, to present myself to Madame Antoinette Sterling, again being fortu-

nate, this distinguished musician being most generous in her welcome, questioning regards my work, which naturally unfolded, and with extreme alacrity, giving me many sidelights into the musical life of London, that might prove useful in shaping my course, being pure kindly advice, which was gratefully welcomed, coming away more than charmed with my visit.

Returning to Stratton Street, Piccadilly, hoping to meet with the same success at the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, unfortunately found Her Ladyship not at home, so discharging cabby, walked along old Piccadilly, falling into Jimmy's (St. James' Restaurant) for a cocktail, quite by chance running into a bunch of Yanks, who ultimately found out, had only planted their feet in the old town a few weeks previous to my doing, their little game being the introduction of the typewriter into England for the very first time, representing the Remington Company, they proving a cheery lot of lads, we quite taking to one another, which eventually led to promising to spend the week-end with them at the Pigeons Hotel, Richmond on the Thames.

Arriving at this old English inn was instantly charmed with the environment of its position, right on the river bank, with glorious views from its balconies, looking up and down the picturesque reaches.

Intensely amusing, watching the innumerable pleasure craft afloat, principally rowing skiffs, containing mostly coatless Dashers, roaming or romeoing about with their favourite bits of flannelette.

Also a few stationary bulky punts, harbouring motionless humanities, possibly members of the Royal Ananias Society, patiently endeavouring to imitate the immortal Izaak.

Still it was a novel experience, this first view of the lovely stream, the grandest waterflow of its kind in the world, for even in those days, the scenery and vista at this point was second to none.

My typewriting friends used to keep me in roars of laughter during meal times, relating their various experiences in endeavouring to convince business concerns, in this old world, that the typing machine was an urgent adjunct to the necessities of commercial life, and not an infernal grenade, nor implement of war, but it was a long weary process, in finding instant believers, many proving as sceptical as the cuckoo, with the progress obtained, slower than a steam roller, creating consummate grumbling from the head Yankee Office over the slackness of the invasion, still when merchants recovered from the suddenness of the shock, converts began falling quickly in, and guess they soon realized there would be a mighty big howl if ever asked to give them up.

Very soon got fed up with staying at the Metropole, finding it impossible to do any practising or work there, so got in touch through a news ad. with a Private Hotel in Berners Street, which by letters received, sounded like the last word proposition, so went up to inspect, the landlady, pardon, the proprietress who greeted me, being a buxom

roll of crepe de chine, with dew drop earrings, who had kissed the thirties good bye in memoriam, started outlining a phantasy of nil desperandum for twenty-eight shillings per week, that sounded almost a philanthropic delusion, still as my prospects were so obscure, thought it far wiser to hitch up with the eco stakes for the present, than pay hotel doles, consequently retaliated with my requirements, the swift coming answer being "Have just the thing! kindly come this way," hence following my new fairy god-mother up the ascending stairs, caught the aromatic fumes from the midday joint, giving hopeful signs of the two-helps, onion sauce.

The second floor front being roomy and well equipped, and a passably decent piano in the parlour underneath, with use of thrown in, tempted me to clinch, for she wasn't a bad old bird, never once butting in, claiming the lineage descendancy business, from William the Conq., or Oliver, for am terribly averse to false teeth family history.

The establishment's agenda was next detailed, cup of tea, 7.30, breakfast 8.30 to 9.30, dinner at seven, parting with a shining James as deposit, announced my arrival for the next afternoon, and did, finding my allotment quite ready.

Having agreed to do a theatre with a friend, donned the requisite togs, and upon hearing the blissful peals from the belfry, slid down to join the jocund gathering, immediately being shown next to a cosmetic bijou, of the baby bunting formula, whose age was cryptic, and destined to score badly beneath the mistletoe.

No separate tables to me seemed odd, only one long feasting board, private hotel they call it, nixy ! nixy ! I've landed in a good old unadulterated beanery, instantly feeling the optical rays from the other gastronomers, focusing on the fresh new guy.

Yes ! fairly in it ! with nothing to be done, but get away with it, consoling myself with " here goes," the landlady at the head doing the serving, whispering to the waitress, for whom it was destined, with the individual catching my curiosity most, being the immaculate sycophant sitting beside her, possibly the Star Boarder, thought I ! having heard of the brand, and that no boarding house was ever actually complete without, yet never dreamt it would befall my lot to witness a real live one in action.

I'd struck it plum, both the Beanery and the Star, for there he was with pomaded hair, and a Harry Tate needle pointed mustache, tossing soft bouquets into the right ear lobe of the carver, making her squirm and feeling like when mother said she could put her hair up, mesmerizing her to such extent, that she keeps lifting all the sinecure bits over on to his plate, for when the roast fowl came on, my lot was the drumstick, but from the corner of my vision, spotted the breast portion and wishbone glide onto his crockery.

Coming down late one morning ran against the old gal, so handed her two dead head stalls for the opera (*Carmen*), Covent Garden, which nearly gave her valvularitis.

That night at dinner, the roast was loin of lamb, and my

portion the chop with three quarters of kidney underneath, three days later slipped her a couple more for Charlie Wyndham, and you should have seen the cut of fowl's breast that came my way, proving the vouchers had certainly clicked, sure delivering the goods.

Consternation seemed to have struck the Star Boarder, completely non-plussed at the going west of all his choice little tiddlely bits, for when offering the script, expressed a desire to secrecy, it beginning to look as if the Star was whacked; in fact, he'd certainly got the wind up, for one night he puts on a great spurt, intermingled with plenty of soft stuff, but to his disgust saw the extra sticks of asparagus travel the same route as the fowl's breast.

Was beginning to think, if I didn't let up a bit on this dead head game, I'd become the Star Boarder myself.

THE FIRST NIBBLE

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIRST NIBBLE

THE Earl of Rosslyn, going into Mitchell's Royal Library one morning, noticed Mr. Ashton standing in the main office.

Good morning, Mr. Ashton ! Can I have a word with you ?

Certainly, My Lord ! Kindly come this way ! (entering private office).

Now ! I've got the Duke and Duchess of Teck and Princess Mary, dining with me, fortnight Sunday, and would like you to suggest something really novel in the way of entertainment ?

Have got just the very thing ! My Lord !

What's that ?

A chap who plays the Banjo !

Plays the Banjo ! (looking most suspicious).

Yes ! My Lord !

Is he a coloured man ?

No ! My Lord !

Does he black up !

No ! My Lord !

Then how in the devil does he play the Banjo ?

Mr. Cammeyer, who only recently arrived from America, plays an entirely new type of instrument, and it's quite delightful, feel almost certain both your guests and yourself would be charmed with his performance !

You actually think so ! As I'm still a bit sceptical !

Shall I request him to call on your Lordship ? So you can have a talk with him ?

Capital idea ! Say next Thursday morning ! About eleven !

Such was the story unfolded upon reaching the Library's offices, in response to an urgent letter.

Where does Lord Rosslyn live ?

15 Grosvenor Square !

Well ! I'll go round and endeavour to clinch the matter !

By the way ! As it's Saturday ! What are you doing this afternoon ?

Nothing special ! Why ?

Would you care to come to the Honourable Artillery Headquarters ? We've got a shindy on ! If so be here about two-thirty !

Thanks very much ! Should be delighted !

Keeping my appointment, turned up as suggested, finding my host getting into his uniform, and whilst conversing in his private sanctum, the little window back of the clerk's desk suddenly opened, a whispering voice saying : " There is a lady in front, requiring information regards any novelties suitable for evening parties ! " Mr. Ashton being then down to Wolseys, couldn't possibly emerge, so spotting the opportunity, said :

Do you mind, if I have a word with her ?

Certainly not ! Do by all means ! and good luck to you !

Going out into the front, was confronted by rather a handsome woman, beautifully gowned, immediately remarked :

Mr. Ashton desires to apologize for being unable to see you, requested me to deputize on his behalf ! Will you kindly state your requirements ?

Really wanted to know if there was anything very special that could be suggested for an evening party !

Can most highly recommend a person, just over from America, who plays a new style of Banjo !

I'm not over partial to Americans !

Regret to hear that, Madam ! But this turn is exceptional, in fact quite artistic, and feel sure would be an acquisition to your party !

Is he a respectable looking person ?

Quite passable, Madam !

You must remember the Americans are rather a mixed lot !

Possibly so ! Although this one may not be another George Washington, feel you have nothing to fear !

The Banjo, you know ! Isn't held in very high esteem ! Rather doubt if it would appeal to my guests !

You needn't hesitate a moment on that point, Madam ! For assure you, it will prove a great success, for his repertoire includes all the popular salon numbers, besides various selections of classical music, and you'll have the good fortune to be one of the first to introduce his playing to London Society, having only come over for a short season, bringing letters of introduction to noted social leaders, so will shortly be in great demand, for his performance happens to be completely out of the common !

You don't happen to know of anything else you can suggest, likely to be more suitable ?

Nothing, Madam ! This style of banjo playing is unique, simply fascinating, so trust you won't waver, but decide at once, securing his services ! You'll certainly have no regrets !

What's his name ?

Mr. Cammeyer !

Is he a German ?

No, Madam ! Simply an American !

You haven't by any chance a photo, just to see what he looks like ?

Unfortunately haven't. And sincerely trust you'll forgive my assurance ! For I'm the individual !

Really ! How amusing ! Quite exciting ! Well ! Think you'd better come !

Thank you very much ! When will it take place, and the address ?

First Thursday in June ! Mrs. Leslie, Queen's Gate Gardens. But they've full particulars here !

I'm very grateful, Madam ! And bid you good afternoon !

Returning to my agent, highly delighted, said :

Clinched it !

You haven't !

Quite right ! Mrs. Leslie ! Queen's Gate !

Well, you've got some damned cheek !

Never mind, if you can't pull them off, naturally must hustle myself ! But just think ! That's my first bally engagement ! Hurray !

Sauntering round the following Thursday morn to 15 Grosvenor Square, pushed the ivory button, the door immediately opened by a shiny buttoned servant, requesting my mission, which quickly put wise, being asked inside, then escorted to the far end of a long spacious room, terminating with the handing out of my card to complete the elucidation, flopped into a cushy seat, awaiting events, allowing only a few moments to gain my composure, before

the incoming of a tall aristocratic looking gentleman, who upon advancing, seemed to be giving me the complete size up, opening the ball with :

Good morning, Mr. Cammeyer ! Hear you are coming to play for us on Sunday week !

If it's your wish ! Shall be delighted, Lord Rosslyn ! Understand your banjo is quite charming ! We're all keenly interested to hear it !

I trust so, My Lord ! About what time would you desire me to be here ?

Somewhere round 9.30 !

Thank you, My Lord ! Good morning, Lord Rosslyn !
Good morning !

15 Grosvenor Square is a large commanding looking mansion, standing on the North side, almost midway between Duke and North Audley Streets. Naturally was immensely elated over the chance of at last securing a hearing before London Society for the first time, still remaining quite calm, showing no trace of nerves, wondering whether it was likely to turn out a frost, having steeled myself to see it was a success, no matter what the responsibilities were hanging on it, having patiently waited all this time, endeavouring to secure a hearing, considered myself more than fortunate, with such a grand opportunity as a curtain raiser.

Accompanied by my accompanist, turned up on the

eventful Sunday as directed, being shown into a small library, the butler shortly coming in with a tray loaded with chicken sandwiches and a bottle of fiz, which wasn't neglected.

It was nearing ten before a message came requesting our presence in the Drawing Room, His Lordship greeting us most cordially as we entered, expressing anticipated pleasure over the possibilities of hearing the Jo.

There wasn't more than about a dozen listeners present, all seated in roomy chairs, in sort of semicircle (minstrel fashion) facing the grand piano, stationed in the window's recess.

Losing no time, taking only a moment to get properly tuned, opened up, playing two numbers. His Lordship immediately coming forward saying :

That's certainly a very sweet toned instrument !
Reminds me of the zither !

It's called a zither banjo, My Lord !

Indeed ! How curious ! May I take it a moment ?
Certainly ! With pleasure !

With this His Lordship started showing my Jo to all present, giving me the opportunity of viewing my audience, at once recognizing the Duke and Duchess of Teck (Princess Mary) and their daughter, our present Queen, from photos seen in various pictorials, the Duchess rather a large person with a great charm of countenance sitting directly

in front of me, the Duke being at the far end, His Grace being a tall heavily built figure, dark complexion, and heavy black mustache.

Lord Rosslyn upon handing back my banjo, wanted to know if it was possible to hear any of the old darkie melodies, and obliged with those Patti was so fond of hearing, the evening regards myself being exceedingly easy work, and most enjoyable, for everyone seemed so simple, nice, and easy to please, making it a pleasure, in endeavouring to entertain them, it going on till well after midnight, before the party began breaking up, the Duke then coming forward, asking me if there was a likelihood of my being in London during the autumn, as being president of one or two musical societies, who held their concerts on Sunday evenings, would like to arrange for me to play, one specially the Meistersingers Club in St. James' Street.

Just upon preparing to leave, Lord Rosslyn again coming forward, remarked :

Your banjo has been most enjoyable, and greatly pleased us all ! Can only wish you success in London ! You've certainly convinced me that a white man can play the banjo, after all !

THE BARONESS BURDETT-COUTTS



BARONESS BURDETT-COUTTS

Copyright Elliott & Fry Ltd

CHAPTER IX

THE BARONESS BURDETT-COUTTS

STANDING in the spacious front part of Chappell's Music Saloon in Bond Street one morning, talking to Edward Chappell, suddenly the entrance door was opened by a footman, in passing a heavily veiled lady, appearing to actually float towards the end of the long counter, against which personally was leaning.

It was impossible to avoid noticing this personage, who undoubtedly of high social status, yet carried a rather eccentric air, regards her general movements.

Immediately overheard her remark to the clerk at the desk :

Can you kindly give me the address of Mr. Cammeyer, who plays the banjo ?

The clerk, giving me the glance, answered :

The person you mention happens to be close by, talking to Mr. Chappell ! Shall I request him to speak to you ?

Would feel grateful if you would !

The clerk moving towards me, simply reiterating what was overheard, made me advance, saying :

Understand, Madam, you are making enquiries regards myself?

Are you the Mr. Cammeyer who plays the banjo?

Quite correct, Madam!

Are you disengaged on the 19th, as I'm having a reception that evening and would like you to play?

Am free that evening and shall be delighted if you will kindly state your name and address?

The Baroness Burdett-Coutts, No. 1 Stratton Street! Should like you there about nine! As everything now seems arranged, I'll bid you good day!

Good morning, My Lady!

Resuming my confab with Mr. Chappell, he remarked:

Wasn't that the Baroness Burdett-Coutts?

Yes! And booked me for the 19th!

At times, she entertains very largely, and you'll enjoy playing there, for she's one of the kindest and most benevolent women in England, continually using her vast wealth to alleviate suffering amongst the poor, and it would be a godsend if there were a few more like her!

As one strolled westward down Piccadilly in those days, Berkeley Street was where the rainbow ends, regards shops, for directly opposite the high walls enclosing the grounds and mansion of Devonshire House (the home of the Duke of that name) confronted you.

At the end of same on Piccadilly cuts in that blind alley known as Stratton Street, which is only a dumpty affair of a few hundred yards, yet contains several charming residences that fortunately possess the privilege of overlooking the Duke's extensive gardens.

No. 1 was quite a recognized land mark in London's West End, during the Victorian era, standing at the corner of Piccadilly, one section facing that thoroughfare, the windows of which, richly furnished with distinctive lace curtains, draped gracefully back, revealing rather a rude marble lady, deliberately turning her back on the continuous stream of pavement hoofers, wending their way both east and west.

No London Season ! Is ever complete ! Unless it's collared some " Creature," to kick up the big noise about, a Top of the Biller ! nominally called the Lion, and is continually on the qui vive to spot some psychological Alas, who has suddenly scorched, or been boosted into fame, whether a film star or foreign potentate, it doesn't really matter as long as the idol isn't English, for homebred shiners are barred !

Why ! could never quite fathom, except that it's mighty difficult to work up the hothouse fantasia to sizzling heat, over the next door sleuth, compared with the thousands of miles away savaloy.

The moment " The Beyond's " intended visit becomes a cert., the vast army of Fleet Street Scribes shed coats, roll sleeves, test fountains on thumb nails, and begin

feeding the Dailies with gullible gargle, the enfiladed boomerang hits the public at the porridge course, never ceasing throughout the day, winding up with the 6.30 late.

This avalanche of rumour, once loosened, magnifies both in quantity and mystery as the time slides on for the "Big Fuss" to hit the town. If it's a Film Star! Well! that really doesn't matter, for they seem to buzz up, fresh every hour, like chocolates, with their salaries so huge, making you giddy counting the noughts, likewise the novelty of the most likely, new monthly hubbies.

But! If it's the Sorcerer of Hoodostan, its fantastical stories regarding the amazing beauty of his harem, as his nibs intends bringing the bunch, unless prevented by the Old Maids' Trade Union, who've lodged a caveat with the Ministry of Labour, pleading for the refusal of these zenanas to land, owing to the appalling distress, already rampant amongst their eligibles in this land of hope.

General Boulanger! Was the Big It in '89, when suddenly he swung in midst a thrilling fanfare of trumpets, all Music Halls, Theatre Orchestras, Military Bands, Organ-grinders, etc., continually playing that stirring Boulanger March by Louis Ganne whose fame for martial tunes, never been surpassed, until the whole town echoed with it.

Who was engineering the propaganda stunt, was certainly no slouch, for the General's photos instantly appeared in scores of shop windows, sweets, dainties, and chef concoctions named after him, Grand Dames falling over one another, to be first in grabbing his presence, at their

salons, in fact the howl of the day, was the General's blowing in on the old burg.

What the General's object was ! Or possibly had tucked up his kimono, was religiously kept secret, whether it was visions of the coming of the Entente Cordiale, wanting to butt in first, endeavouring to enlist and entice John Bull's sympathies, with the possibility of installing a monarchy next door, in place of a republic, heaven only knows.

Prompt to time was my arrival at the Baroness's, on the night of the 19th, at once being shown to a large room, in which gents' outdoor paraphernalia already lay resting, clearly proving a feed session was on.

Standing upon the centre table was a porcelain tablet bearing several names written in pencil. The General's struck me at once, also that of a well known Peer, and deposited at the foot of the tablet. The Peer's visiting card, this seeming rather mysterious, but just then the butler entered in a communicative mood unravelling the conundrum, for it appears the Earl who was expected to dine, was totally unaware of the General's presence, for upon seeing evidence of same, deposited his card, unceremoniously departing, which at the time created a spicy bit of scandal amongst the coterie of ultra fashionables, even spreading as far as being juggled with, rather clumsily, in the press.

My accompanist shortly turning up, remarked to him :

We've got the great French General in the audience to-night, for he's dining here !

Good biz ! We must turn on the Boulanger ! Some time or other !

We'll certainly put that over !

Decided now was the opportune moment to get my bearings on the Reception Room before the crowd arrived. Ascending the massive winding staircase, discovered it led directly into the very same, certainly a most beautiful salon, being extremely large, long and lofty, containing many rare works of art, exquisite furniture and hangings, a platform on which rested the piano, being at the far end, in the window's recess, close to another marble lady almost as rude.

This commanding position giving me as clear a view as you'd get from a parson's look-out in a church, it being so much easier to judge just when to inflict, or keep silent, if you've an open vision, for any one who has reaped experience in this type of work, soon picks up the game to a nicety, set programmes being exceedingly rare.

Had hardly finished tuning, when the dining contingent strolled in, turning to the left, taking cover close to the entrance, the Baroness appearing to be in animated conversation with the General, whom you couldn't fail to spot, looking as if he'd stayed the course, and struck good going, rather diminutive in figure, and sappy in complexion, the long pointed beard making him look more like a painless dentist than an army leader, his phiz not seeming to possess the necessary sting, enabling him to upset or shift the prevailing regime of his native soil, though undoubtedly

he suffered a great disadvantage from the get-up of his togs, it being plainly visible that none of our Great Alexanders had ever slipped a tape round his chestiphone, his bags surely designed for safety first, none of your razor blade creases, more on the jacktarian order, sadly wanting the tailor's goose to do them a good turn.

The guests now began arriving in shoals, the Baroness greeting them as they entered, and after paying their respects to their hostess, formed into various clusters, in different parts of the room, with presently the Baroness getting exceedingly busy bringing many forward, presenting them to the General, and personally got busy with my end of the stick.

The whole affair never working up to the buzzing stage, in fact rather on the soft pedal order, everybody seemingly suffering with timidityitis. After playing three different times, noticed the Baroness coming direct towards me, Her Ladyship immediately remarking :

May I take your Baby for a moment, Mr. Cammeyer ?
(at the same time holding out her arms).

With pleasure, your Ladyship !

With this the Baroness moved slowly around the room showing the banjo to various guests, with myself mightly anxious and nervous fearing that some one not noticing, might think it a passed ashtray, either flicking or throwing the end of their finished fag on it, for if well alight, landing on the vellum, and it burst with a loud report, what price the commotion, especially the General's, possibly imagine

the Revolution had started, but fortunately it survived the ordeal with the Baroness ultimately restoring it, at the same time saying !

Everyone is charmed with your Banjo ! The General quite delighted, mentioning how much he enjoyed your playing !

Suddenly noticed the General acting as if he was about to make departure, for he moved about, shaking hands with several, so giving the tip to my accompanist began the Boulanger March, almost like a whisper, several at once noticing it, causing smiles about the room, and as the General cleared the door, burst forth fortissimo, amidst considerable laughter.

The moment the General had vanished, a very different atmosphere overcame the assembly, the entire scene becoming animated, one hardly realizing it was the same reception, clearly proving the majority present didn't exactly know how to take the General, who possibly would have been mighty glad to have hit up against a more breezy affair.

Still ! such a decided and sudden change put vim into the party, restoring its equilibrium which at one time looked like being somewhat of a fizzle, for the invites finding their talking machines still able to paternoster, didn't hesitate on all available subjects.

Noticing how delighted everyone seemed, with this new

esprit de corps, decided not to interrupt with any further playing, unless a lull suddenly showed signs of creeping in, for the assembly having been most attentive in the early stages, why now attempt to destroy what they'd been longing for, personally felt the Baroness fully realized this herself, never once looking my way, which would have naturally meant, get busy, if she had.

It wasn't long before the crowd began moving towards the supper rooms, for could plainly see Her Ladyship intimating as much to the many she spoke, yet presently turning, came tripping over to where I was stationed, at once remarking :

The evening has been most successful ! Mr. Cammeyer, and wish to thank you, for all you've done ! Now come and have supper !

BUTTING IN

CHAPTER X

BUTTING IN

THE London Season of '88 was now in full swing, with the personal outlook far more encouraging, as engagements were constantly rolling in, several of the places at which my services were requisitioned, being truly magnificent, and the hospitality dispensed, lavish, giving me many an eye opener as well as insight into the festive éclat of the fashionable world of London.

One of the most interesting and unique affairs, was Mrs. Ronalds' Sunday Afternoons, at her charming home in Cadogan Place, for this gifted and popular hostess, having been a resident over here for many years, had through her distinct ability and cleverness, become obliged to virtually assume the leadership of the American Set, consequently all the Who's Who's ! flocked to her home on these occasions, especially to hear the exceptional musical programmes, for it's doubtful if ever such a wonderful galaxy of talent has ever as yet appeared at any other private sanctum in comparison, when you come to consider that the majority of the top line operatic stars, Patti included,

eminent violinists, 'cellists, also the leading Savoy actors and actresses, all came along at various times and performed, surely it was Some Show, and only an idiot would sidestep the privilege, once he got the offered chance.

It was no easy matter for an obscure performer to gain entrée to this abode ; undoubtedly my letter of introduction from Mrs. Doremus of New York was instrumental in doing the trick, for to name this place appropriately, would be more suitable to call it the " Top Notch Introduction House," for if you got your chance, putting it well across, lucrative work was most certain to follow, for your listeners were drawn principally from the Grand Dames, who spread themselves on sumptuous entertaining, hall-marking any turn especially appealing to their fancies as being certainly the goods, otherwise Fanny would never have put it up.

Sir Cuthbert Quilter's was the home for beautiful pictures, his commanding house in South Audley Street holding numerous gems, and well remember playing in that charming miniature gallery, with its parquet flooring, and divan style furnishing, with those two outstanding works, Herkomer's " Chelsea Pensioners " also Millais's " Scene on Norfolk Broads," staring one in the face; besides in the dining-room hung two exceptionally fine Leaders.

Sir Cuthbert's Stag Parties, entertaining the Liberal Unionists, eminent R.A.s, and Sculptors, were rare shows for cheeriness.

Ran against two out and out great pictures at the Hon.

Mrs. Albert Brassey's, in Berkeley Square, fancy Corot's, although not being a connoisseur, imagine from the breezy style and finish, they were undoubtedly examples from the brush of that famous Frenchman.

One engagement in Grosvenor Street gave me a sidelight into a certain phase of fashionable life, quite beyond the usual line, the house gorgeously decorated with flowers, etc., the assembly, gathering from the lingo, comprised principally from the sporting section of society, for although the musical side of the show was excellent, it made little appeal to the throng present, in fact might just as well been scrapped, for all the entertaining it did, seeming to interrupt and interfere with the general trend of converse, mostly centred on sporty events, and forthcoming race meetings.

Having been invited to join the late stayers at supper, when about thirty sat down, all chatter round the festive board immediately became engrossed over the famous Jockey (Wood) Case ; my word the dope did flow, giving the butler and his assistants a busy time to keep the glasses well charged, quite pointing to a pretty thick night, for although sitting next to Johannes Wolff, who had been fiddling, our confab was mighty limited, being constantly drawn to the various arguments in discussion, all alluding to this notorious incident, with the excitement increasing, likewise opinions and versions more heated as time flew on, culminating towards the close of this homogeneous fricassee, onto rather the border line of a demoralizing orgy, with

members of both sex quite unable to sit upright, proving far from pleasant to witness.

It's always the unexpected that happens, for suddenly, striking like a thunderbolt, came through the news announcing the death within the Royal Family of Germany, putting the lid completely on all State Festivities, such as Concerts, Balls, and Garden Parties, with Society naturally following, possibly a blessing in disguise for certain non-offy Officials, more or less expected to attend such functions, who not possessing their own Court Outfit, are compelled to go knocking on the door of an offspring of Moses, hiring the necessary togs, but it played the very devil with my little game, robbing me of over a dozen bookings, that at once became cancelled, in fact only had three left, saved from being too close to alter, never forgetting the sight at one large gathering in Berkeley Square, when all the Ladies were adorned in funereal black, wearing like coloured ornaments and earrings, also the men with black ties, shirt studs and cuff links. I'd like to see them doing it now, if Little — suddenly slid into Angelville.

With the Season so abruptly wiped out, making professional work momentarily a thing of the past, came as a serious blow to many entertainers, leaving them, as far as London was concerned, without a vestige of anything to do for weeks to come, but personally having encouraging prospects for the forthcoming autumn, decided to extend my sojourn in Merrie England.

During my playing in town, frequently came in contact with a clever family of young ladies, styling themselves the Fraser Quartette ; the eldest sang, one playing the 'cello, another the piano, and Mabel, the youngest, who eventually became Lady Arthur Pearson, playing the violin ; they were a gifted lot of girls, making their entertainment both delightful and charming, and believe it was their mother, who suggested my pitching my tent for a bit at Herne Bay, her eulogistic descriptions of this wonderful bracing seaside resort at last enticing me to take on the venture, having at least two months with nothing to do.

Having never been to an English Seaside, caused intense excitement on my part, picturing the usual far ahead scenes, that never live up, when actually striking the spot, for had worked up with keen anticipation, that delicious fragrance off the briny, when slipping out the Station's exit, only to be met with a fossily seaweedy flavour, but still hopeful the wind might shift.

Upon reaching the front, was amazed at the colossal expanse of beach, with all manner of water craft lolling about on their beam ends, like so many fielding cricketers, awaiting the debut of the incoming long winded stonewaller, but where was the sea, was what I wanted to know, having come all this distance expecting to find salted H₂O, was beginning to think I'd been planted with a pup, so tackled a well beavered longshoreman, requesting elucidation, who immediately directed my optic to discover a faint silvery line, certainly a mile out, who when

questioned if it would ever come closer, assured me everything would be right in a few hours' time, leaving me wondering if there was any crazy enough bather in the place, who'd hoof the furlongs, for the sake of a dip.

My abode was the Robinson Crusoe Room at the Ship Inn, a quaint spiderwebby old fashioned loft with one big window, facing the sea, when it was in, but Robin hadn't forgotten much when clearing out, beyond a few derelict cane bottomed, over perforated wicked wickers, a musical cot, and a prehistoric spinet, with nixy teeth, possibly some ward in chancery, with no earthly chance of ever again muttering, for no living dentaltition could possibly mould sets for its upper and lower registers, that would rouse the vocalion chords of its interior, sufficient to gambol off the five finger exercise, let alone wade through the charming caprices of Stravinski.

Within a week of digging in, came the unique opportunity of witnessing my first cricket match, for the Canterbury Gala Week, beginning on the Bank Holiday, with the Australians battling against Kent, was the opening event, a genial friendly having insisted on my joining him, so off we sped in a tip top dog cart, prefixed by a spirited cob, that ticked off dusty sequences of mileage at a breezy pace, giving me my first view of the famous wildflowered county, known as the Garden of England, proving both a joy and delight, when wending our course through those glorious Blean Woods, bathed in verdant glistening foliage, lit by a radiant sun.

Clearing this woodland spot, our speedy cob began shoving his nose through the vineland lanes, veritably 'opping it amongst the 'ops, for long tracks of these wonderful blooms lay ahead, neatly framed, towering well above your noddle, far past their embryo stage, almost verging on the pick, emitting that peculiar odoriferous scent, making you virtually taste the brew, fortunately the days, when hops were hops, and beer was beer, and no glass of good old bitter was ever ashamed to stare you bang in the face, with a certified analysis of its innards, for

Old King Bung

Was a Merry Old Lung,

A Jolly Old Lung, was He !

He'd Quench Yer Thirst,

Without Making Yer Burst,

Leaving Yer, Fit as a Flea !

The red letter era of British Ale, in the opinion of many, now possibly gone forever, for confess what passed my throttle, during the tail end of the war period, was as near akin to abdominal wash, as the contents of a wayside sarsaparilla bottle, requiring all the bicarbs. and citrates in the pharmacopœa to counteract the aciduous combustion.

Crossing the river at Sturry, striking the Margate turnpike, instantly got mixed amongst all manner of vehicles, packed with country bumpkins, full of laughter and merriment, their jovial spirits reacting wonders on

the more silently inclined, linked likewise with the fragrance from the honeysuckled hedges, that blended its way into the aroma of one's baccy, giving that elixir touch to the tightly toothed beloved pipe.

So along we scampered, passing many old antediluvian cottages, draped in climbing wisteria and scarlet geraniums, also huge fat faced sunflowers, beaming from their tall slender stalks, glaring at you like a lot of pantomimic bogies, at last rounding into the old cathedral town, finding it buzzing with humanity, and fluttering in bunting, the Canterbury Belles, adorned in the whitest of frocks, concealing their faces under huge straw bonnets, well groomed coaches and fours, jogging along, upper decks packed with Society folk, many turnouts being quite up to Horse Show form, amazing me at the excitement a cricket tussle could produce, far beyond any Giant and White Sock duel, flustering my anticipation up, to shortly hitting a pretty warm time.

Shoals of enthusiasts were swarming the turnstiles, darting off in search of a favourable perch, myself ultimately collaring one on a sunbaked plank, that instantly started up central heating, but giving such a grand view of the green swarded arena, decided on holding on, for although this immense reach of billiardry napped turf seemed desolated, beyond a few spikes sticking up in the centre, it was highly amusing watching the excited fans, on its fringe, for the marquees, tents, and improvised stands, were packed with spectators.

Some long time elapsed without anything startling happening, the galleryites never once showing peevishness, in fact quite content, sort of not caring a darn, whether the show came on, or not ; still the curtain raiser was two jokers in long white nighties, who slowly waddled towards the middle, then separated, each toying with the upshooting spikes, but presently got together again, retiring still good paladins.

Another breathing space being granted, when suddenly a whole bunch of All Whites emerged from a marquee, smiling and rollicking in the highest of spirits, tossing a red ball from one to the other, endeavouring to deceive and surprise the next recipient, as they made leisurely towards the centre, convincing me by their antics and demeanour, that cricket was certainly a jolly game, for they held little confabs amongst themselves, resulting in hilarious outbursts of laughter, which was rather annoying to the onlookers, who would as well enjoyed the jokes.

Things evidently began brightening, for spotted two other jovials, strutting for the middle, busy adjusting finger coverings, shins protected with mud guards, bats slung under their arms, immediately taking opposite end positions in front of the spikes, one at once, after hitching up his pantaloons, having his bat sighted, started pounding a dugout in the turf, the All Whites automatically dispersing to various field positions, so actually the fun began, for one All White, gently patting the red, waded out into no man's land, suddenly stopping, hesitating barely a second, swung round bursting into high velocity, increasing

at every yard covered, until reaching the spikes, slammed the red down the crease, at a terrible pace, bang on to the warrior's willow, with a divil of a thud, yet after five consecutive doses of the like, he was still living, when all the fielders balanced to corners, followed by prolonged applause, hence becoming mighty inquisitive, asked the joker beside me :

Kindly tell me ! What's the applause for ?

Maiden over !

Over where !

Then followed many exciting moments, interspersed with brilliant fielding, throwing and catching, with the batsmen punching and chopping the raspberry to all parts of the boundary.

Well remember the excitement caused by that famous bat Bonnor, of the Australians, lifting the red into cloudville, clean out of the grounds, punishing it further away at every slog, making one imagine it would be safer to sling a net over the Crystal Palace, if he kept on increasing the distance.

Cricket quite fascinated me, possessing so many good points, being fine exercise for the actual performers, and a grand rest cure for the spectator, for you've the whole day to sit placidly, tuning in with Morpheus for a time if you like, with annoyance to no one, so why go thousands of miles away for the new stunted bath in the sun, blowing holes in your bank balance, when you can touch it for a bob a day, at any county match.

If you ever wanted the real unadulterated Hæmorrhagic Kyphonis, quick ! a winter's Sunday in London would bring it on to whack the band. Don't think I've ever struck such a mournful doleful hole as town was on those dark grey Sabbaths, for coming out of your digs, you'd have hard work to find anything moving, beyond a stray prowling puss, or a clanking milkman, with things improving a bit as kirk time came nearer, but nothing to get hysterical over, hence most everyone wandered to Hyde Park, to catch a glimpse of the after church parade, but you mustn't smoke, nay, nay, Pauline ! nixy on the nicotine, for if you disobeyed, you were dubbed a bounder in once.

The story running prevalent, " Only one fortunate individual " privileged to enjoy his weed in the Park on Sundays, was Sam Lewis, the famous millionaire money-lender, so anyone gasping for a whiff of havana had to dog Sammy, with any luck slipping close into the leeward, to inhale the fragrance from his six-inchers, for they were toppers ; such stupidity nowadays, Winnie would've Birken-headed in two ticks.

If the days were dull, the nights were worse, there being no public entertainments, even not many restaurants open, so was it to be wondered that Musical Clubs were in vogue, where gentlemen could stroll in after dining, smoke their cigars, have a chat, and enjoy some entertainment.

The ones remembered best being the Gallery Club in Bond Street, The Grafton, and the Meistersingers Club in

St. James' Street, now the Royal Societies Club, and when recently lunching at the latter with a friend, it seemed so strange the room we were repasting in, used to be the concert hall, remarking to my host, that the door he sees the waiters emerging through with the food, used to be the entrance from the artistes' room, to take the platform, and that I'd done the trip, many a time.

The Duke of Teck was President in those times, taking active interest in its welfare, and many excellent shows they used to stage, when the late Alfred Caldicott was their musical adviser.

If you wanted a flutter on the stock market, the goods were Nitrates, the air simply reeking with rumours, the live wire engineering the stunt being the late Colonel North, the Nitrate King. Well ! The Colonel gave what he called the Nitrate Ball, commandeering the Metropole Hotel for the occasion.

It was a fancy dresser, except for about four individuals, who were handed orders to be present, in case any of the non-dancers were to be entertained.

Heaven only knows how many thousands were invited, but arriving early myself, stood in the entrance hall of the Whitehall Rooms, watching the crowds pouring in, thinking the stream would never cease.

The opening of the Ball was heralded with a procession of trumpeters heading the Colonel, dressed as Henry the VIII, escorting Lady Churchill, dressed as Anne ; by jove the old cochineal faced Colonel did look a knut.

There were two Ball Rooms going in full swing, with the finest Viennese bands playing all those lovely dreamy waltzes of Strauss and Waldteufel, such a difference to the present day type, making one long for the swing of fashion to twist again back, unearthing those delicious haunting melodies.

It was certainly a most wonderful scene, everybody being handed a silk handkerchief as a programme, with a diagram of all the rooms printed on the back, and never in my life saw so many booths for drinks, you couldn't move a dozen yards without striking one, and any present day Yank, wanting a hooch, would imagine he'd passed into alcoholic paradise, had he been present.

Some of the costumes were great, Arthur Roberts as the unfinished dude, was about the most novel imaginable, for no article of his apparel was complete, the coat just in its first fitting stage, the opera hat with no covering to frame.

Long before Supper, which was timed for one, vast crowds began congregating thick as bees, lining up in front of the entrance doors, with the presumed intention of making cert. of a seat, pointing to the likelihood of trouble ahead, so proving, for when the doors did actually swing open, the scramble resolved itself into a veritable scrimmage, becoming intensified from the pressure at the back upon so small congested opening, that people for the moment completely lost their heads, behaving more like zoological inmates, treating each other most lovingly to seemingly half-nelsons and jujits, in fact rather difficult

to discern, which was the most popular grip, women screaming, fainting, falling, and trampled on, rendering their costumes quite eligible for a jumble sale, was not a particularly pleasant incident to witness ; fortunately this mêlée only lasted a few minutes, when sanity was restored.

Personally, didn't go in to supper until after three, then joining a merry party consisting of Arthur Roberts, Walter Pallant, and Lionel Monckton, yet even at that hour the rooms were packed to almost suffocation, the tumult from laughter and converse, deafening.

Our table happening to be close to the wine serving counter, where seven cork extractors were taxed to their limit, with bunches of waiters lined up, waiting for requirements, generally leaving with three full bottles in each hand, many collisions happening with loud reports of bursting bubbly, although rather startling at first, the excitement soon wore off as the cause was known.

The menu would have nonplussed the most fastidious epicurian, with its infinite variety of delicatessens, and the list of vintage wines more than satisfied the cravings of the ever thirsty.

About 4.30 tremendous cheering broke forth, as someone was observed climbing onto the top of the table, at the far end of the room, sure enough, the Colonel, who was North, but as far off the pole, as a ginger popper, gracefully raising his glass, proposing the health of his many guests, this certainly going so terrific that it inspired imitators, who were not so successful, ultimately resulting in more being

fitted for under the board, than reaching the roof. Still it was all good fun, and for a time highly amusing, but when the ticker reached 6 G.M., thought it about quitting time, and did, the streets then being black with carriages, waiting for over a thousand, who were bent on seeing the finish, it turning out a look on job, as far as personally concerned, never once having to unlumber my Jo.

Charity Bazaars were quite the racket in Victorian days, and one bumper affair was the Ice Carnival, held at the Albert Hall ; why called anything icy, could never fathom, for the biggest berg would have gone fut in two ticks, so intensely hot was the atmosphere.

This was actually a huge society function, organized by the various leaders of fashion, dividing themselves into various clusters, each group working its own stall, one being the American, decorated with the Stars and Stripes, the American bunch engineering it, with Mrs. Ronalds at the head, who incidentally wrote me, requesting my lending a hand, and did, hitting up against a most amusing experience.

Stocked entirely by donations of every conceivable description, making it a thumb-nail Selfridges, amongst the numerous contributions being a banjo, kindly given by Chappell & Co., a brain wave striking one of the ladies, that I should play this instrument, at short intervals, attracting purchasers, to which agreed provided they secured me an extra high stool to perch on, which was successfully negotiated, so up I jumped, plunking forth popular tunes

of the hour, that the surging crowds were familiar with.

During these short recitals, The Duchess of Marlborough, Lady Randolph Churchill, Countess of Essex, and Mrs. Helen Jaffray, each armed with a tiny tin pail, would dive into the throngs, soliciting contributions for their banjoist, away they manœuvred, elbowing in and out the crush, nobbing for all it was worth, the large amount of coin purloined, quite amazing, especially during the afternoons when the ouffers were in the majority, principally silver, with an occasional yellow boy thrown in.

The chief administrator of this colossal show was no other than William Whiteley of the big store fame, who consented to undertake the entire organization, and mighty well did they click, for it went with a bang from start to finish, he never once forgetting the comforts of the helpers, for upstairs in private rooms, excellent teas, drinks, and dinners were provided, and most thankfully were they welcomed and appreciated for it was D.H. work.

On the last night, an auction had to be worked, clearing off the remaining contents of the stall, a certain gentleman kindly offering to officiate, but lacking the gift of putting it across, for the wind-up being a cheap stunt, with the crowd a wee bit rough, didn't cotton on to his silky parliamentary style, so realizing he was a washout, quietly retired, leaving them stumped for a get-ridder, hence they jumped on me, insisting my having a shot, which was dead against the grain, having never worked the oracle previously, but eventually got my own back, for in the bidding, insisted

they must keep boosting the price, generally resulting in my landing the articles on the stall holders themselves.

Making up the cash at the finish, which wasn't far off two hundred quid, worked out a detailed account of the coin, placing it all in the little tin cash box, locking same, handing the key to Mrs. Ronalds.

Next morning, when hardly awake, had a terrific shock, a note arriving, saying the cash was fifteen quid short, and could I in any way account for same.

Jumping up, dressing as quickly as possible, flew down to Mrs. Ronalds, for it pointed as if the last person who handled the coin might have had an attack of sticky fingers.

The moment upon arrival, Mrs. R. began explaining that she had not opened the box till this morning, and according to my figures, it was the fifteen short, or else fifteen too much, and wondered if I hadn't made a miscalculation.

Letting me have the box, unlocked same and began hunting for three fivers, folded up neatly about the size of a visiting card, around which I'd put thin rubber bands, and after searching everywhere, met with no result, became bewildered, with Mrs. R. watching me with a critical eye, my stock certainly looked rotten, realizing the horrible position I was placed in, when suddenly it dawned on me to examine the bottom of the top tray, turning it over, lor to behold there were the crispies, stuck firm.

My stock suddenly became a strong bull market, and no one seemed more delighted than Mrs. R., and the idea of any gum on Yours truly's hands, forgotten.

SUBURBIA IN MAYFAIR

CHAPTER XI

SUBURBIA IN MAYFAIR

STROLLING with a friend, through Berkeley Square, one afternoon, pointed to a certain house, saying :

I'm playing there, to-morrow eve !

Oh ! That's where that dreadful fellow —— lives !

Indeed ! What sort of a cove ?

Very O.T., but undoubtedly clever, for he's got a loft full of pigeons, of a type, thoroughly mesmerized, absolutely imbued with all his kite-flyings, but the day isn't far distant when his bubble will burst with a h——l of a bang!

Really one of those ! Is he ?

No question, and will suck his dupes dry of every stitch they possess, then quietly flit before the crash comes !

So plausible, presume his demeanour is irresistible ?

Personally fail to see where it comes in, for his bounce and side, beyond human comprehension ! But such often goes down with Get Rich Quickers !

Berkeley Square in the early nineties was considered one of the most fashionable key positions of Mayfair, being so easily reached in a jiffy from Piccadilly, popping through that jugular vein, Berkeley Street, carrying on all four sides, numerous mansions of importance, many of which, the homes of some of the first families, amongst the most notable, being Lansdowne House (The Marquis and Marchioness of Lansdowne), enclosed within its own grounds on the south side, Lord Rosebery's large brick house on the west, The Honble. Albert Brassey's on the north, and Lord Carnarvon and Sir Squire Bancroft's on the east.

The spacious gardens, enrailed within the centre of this Square, being noted for many stately trees, which during Spring and Summer make this famous locality certainly one of the beauty spots of town.

My appointment was timed for nine, so being such a short distance away, sauntered slowly round, it being such a treat to linger in the open, this soft June night, with the ozone simply invigorating.

Naturally the information handed me, created both curiosity and a tendency of inquisitiveness as to what the Reception would actually develop into, hence upon approaching, hesitated a bit, watching the various types of individuals, creeping under the canvas, certainly spotting no Mayfairians coming under my vision, but the things they rolled up in, were highly amusing, principally the old fashioned barouches, good seagoers of the fly brand,

registering the sensations of afloat on the briny, when on the movie.

Coachmen garbed in napless livery, wearing tiles of mysterious heredity, that suffer cockades pinned on for nuptial jobs, and yanked off for funereal, flicking their whips onto worn out crocks, hocks adorned with spavin scars, forced into this pilgrimage from some of the far away Bec's, under the promise of nosebags between the acts.

Poor old plugs, you couldn't help but pitying, wishing them a thick bed of straw, when their long day of cargoing was o'er.

Mingling amongst the arriving invites, followed inside, depositing my coverings in the cloak room, decided to report myself for duty, the stairs seemed choked with humanity, mostly of the mixed grill order, hence progression was somewhat slow, for at the top of the landing stood a servant directing the throngs into the first stage reception room, hence upon my reaching the enviable spot, immediately heard a very loud voice talking with a heavy droll, being far away from natural, so concluded this must be "It," Mine Host ! but the jam of R.S.V.P.s being so thick, strolled along to the front room, where overheard music ensuing, for seated at the piano was a long haired warbler, with a beak like a carrion crow, bellowing forth The Garden of Something, whilst glad-eyeing the peroxides.

Even this great effort didn't create the slightest enliven-

ment amongst the assembly, who appeared completely obsessed with tongue tied timidity, apparently strangers to each other, and far too nervy and bashful to butt in.

Suddenly again heard that familiar loud vulgar droll, coming along the passage, shouting "Where's that Bunjo Player ! I wonder !" You beauty ! thought I, you don't know me, so go hunting a bit, spotting my mark, slid out the other door, as he entered the main salon, strutting about as if owning the Square, myself crossing to the window leading onto a balcony, moving through, stood watching the old gee-gees, anchored up against the curb on the gardens side, hoofing away at the wood blocks, tossing high their nosebags, juggling for the very last oat.

Soliloquizing a few minutes, concluded it best to tackle the gent, and did, remarking : "Hear you've been enquiring for me ! I'm the Bunjo Player ! And at your service," so without wasting further words, nor time, was soon tuned to the johanna, rendering a couple of numbers, which went certainly leady, with shortly after the carrion merchant doing another, and later again myself, which upon finishing, a male invite strolls up, saying :

What you're playing ! Reminds me of the Irish Harp !
Doesn't happen to be a new kind, by any chance ?

No, Sir ! It's a Zither Banjo !

Have you ever played anything Irish ?

Only Johnnie Jameson !

Ah ! Plenty of spirit in that !

Full of snakes, if you're not mighty careful !

Visions of St. Patrick ! Who is some powerful force !
You're right ! Yanked me into this little old world,
on the 17th of the 3rd !

Did he ! Some years ago, no doubt !

Oh, yes ! Long before dry rot set in, in America!

Before even finishing my converse with this fellow, noticed the guests moving towards the supper rooms, hence realized my job was over, and as the place was stifling hot, being so over populated, decided on clearance, and bunked, tipping my topper to-gether with a sympathetic good night to the weary gees, when passing them along the Square.

The mesmerizing powers of this super-unnatural charmer were certainly mystifying, confessing my personal opinion being somewhat biased through the information already mentioned, still any dunce, once given the griffon, could easily perceive the game this joker was working, playing a bold swaggering existence in the heart of exclusive society-ville, blinding his pigeons with galvanic confidence, rendering them gullible by pneumatic pleasantry, setting back their bank balances with the continuous squeeze, poor old lemons, one couldn't feel but sorry, realizing they'd been dragged into a vicinity, to most of them totally foreign, letting them rub, breathe, and taste the essence of aristocratic atmosphere, hoping such intoxication might possibly render them easier marks, for they were certainly buzzing completely to his liking chasing the ventures of this sapper for all they were worth.

Can picture some of the women folk the next morn, telling the tale over the back yard fence to Mrs. Nosey Parker next door, all about the wonderful reception they attended in Berkeley Square, the delicious strawberries and champagne, endeavouring to make her neighbour purr with envy.

Dropping into the club, ran against the very chap who put me wise, greeting me, " Well ! How'd you get on ? " My reply being quite all right, but the guy's certainly a rumster. You're right ! and his satellites will soon become cognizant, with a bit added.

They hadn't long to wait, for the following August the press came out with the sudden disappearance of a well known Solicitor, who after leaving his office to keep an appointment, has not been heard of for a week, no trace so far known regards his movements, the continental police have been warned to intercept if possible, as his offices here in London are daily besieged with anxious clients who have trusted him personally with appreciable amounts of hard cash.

The mystery of this scamp to my knowledge was never solved, for although bankruptcy proceedings showed defalcations to well over a hundred thousand, with not a vestige of assets, the authorities were never able to bring him to justice, hence the outlook for his many victims was only a tale of sorrow, and can imagine them muttering to themselves when thinking over the night in the Square : " So this is Mayfair ! "

AN ABSENT MINDED BEGGAR

CHAPTER XII

AN ABSENT MINDED BEGGAR

My post one morning contained the following, coming from one of the large Co-op Stores :

Will you please call on our Entertainment Department, respecting professional work !

The same setting me wondering, how they ever got my address, also causing doubtful illusions, as to such an agency being of any service to my type of work, still one never knows his luck in these large towns, so decided to investigate by popping in one morning, interviewing a bushy nappered attendant, whom any tonsorial practitioner would have charged a dollar at least to bob.

This nondescript immediately began elucidating why the above request had been sent, also referring to the heavily paged catalogue of the emporium, showed me photos and descriptions of various acts, such as Punch & Judy's, Conjurers, Hand Bell Ringers, etc., saying space could be found for a likeness of my jib, with description of act, for the fee of one guinea, which instantly didn't clamber for.

He next started asking various questions, such as : "Do you don evening clobber?" intimating if such was the case, he might possibly boost up the fee, at least four and eleven three more.

Coming to the question of price, appeared dumfounded, when informed of my requirements, relating such were far beyond the range of their clients, who generally expected something mighty decent from 10/6 up to 42/-, of course less ten com., hence came away pretty well convinced it had turned out as premeditated.

About three weeks later, received another epistle, stating they could offer me a Saturday afternoon date, short way out of town, for about half my normal, plus exes., and if acceptable, requesting an interview.

Upon following same up, was shown a letter from a Parson down in Kent, which said: "Send the Mr. Cammeyer."

Realizing Saturdays were off days for my game, decided to clinch, so was handed the written instructions, which constituted the contract.

On the important Saturday, slipped into a train at Charing Cross, minus accompanist, none being required, arriving at my destination about three, finding the Parsonage barely a half mile trot.

Strolling up to the porch, connected on the knocker, quickly responded to by a female, who after inviting me in, slipped down the long passage to a room, saying :

"The Man's Come!"

Almost immediately, a long limbed individual, garbed in clerical attire, sallied forth, remarking in rather a wandering undertone " Good Afternoon ! If you'll follow me, will show you the spot in my garden, that has been selected to hold the entertainment, which is being given in honour of my son and his bride, recently returned from abroad, having invited the children and grown ups of my parish to greet them."

Leading the way through twining paths and prickling vines, pulled me along to an open lawn with a gentle slope, saying :

Suggest you put your frame down there !

Doesn't matter where I put it, long as I've got plenty of elbow room !

Your proscenium ! Can then face this way ! Giving all the guests a grand view !

Guess ! They won't miss it !

Presume you put something in your mouth ! When making those squeaking sounds !

Oh, yes ! (never remembering taking anything that made me squeakle ! Still wondering ! What he was driving at !)

Hope the kiddies won't be too noisy ! when Punch belabours Judy !

Afraid I don't get what you're alluding to ! For I'm not a Punch & Judy Merchant !

Aren't you ? That's what was ordered !

Sorry to differ ! But your letter distinctly stated :

“ Send the Mr. Cammeyer ! ” And here are my written instructions !

This is exceedingly awkward ! Some grievous mistake having been made ! By the way ! What do you do ?

Play the Banjo !

Play the Banjo, rather demoralizing, and out of place, at a Parsonage gathering ! Don't you think ?

Possibly not quite up to the social status of Punch & Judy ! But don't predict any ill effects !

If you'll excuse me, I'll just consult my son !

So off he buzzed, leaving me ruminating over the rummiest situation I'd ever been planted with.

Presently they both returned, the son speaking in a kindly cordial manner, giving me the impression he was rather a decent sport, for he sort of half way apologized for the muddle his father had undoubtedly made of the whole thing, exonerating myself from any blame, which politely thanked him for, saying it was regrettable, but what was to be done.

The Parson then venturing to suggest, that if he agrees paying my rail fares, would I release him from further liability, which naturally put the lid on at once, the Son also rebuking his Dad, that it's both absurd and unfair to ask Mr. Cammeyer to even think of such an arrangement.

The trouble the Parson was up against was the amusement of the Kids, which the Son suggested should be given a bun each, and shoved into the orchard to play. Presently the Parson remarked :

Presume you'd like to change into your costume ?

No thanks ! Simply appear as I am !

Don't even cork your face ?

No ! No such required !

The Son, butting in, telling his father to dig off and attend to the various things he had to do, leaving Mr. Cammeyer in his charge, for he alone would look after me.

With the Parson clearing, the Son invites me inside, steering me into the dining room, producing a bottle of red wine, and a couple of glasses, which with the aid of a few biscuits, we gave a good home, giving me the idea that the father was all cant, and the Son all Chianti.

As we sat having a chat, my host proving himself just what I'd previously sized him for, we could hear the guests arriving, as they strolled past the window towards the arena I was about to enter.

The Son again referring to his father, trusted I'd overlook his eccentricities, informing me what a muddler he'd been for years, even known to have confused burial hymns with nuptial, to which assured him, the incident was quite forgotten, and all I was anxious about, was to endeavour to please, requesting if he'd place a low chair on the lawn, I'd try and play a few things that might interest them.

Getting my Jo, passed out, steering my way round the bunch as much as possible, squatting on the provided chair, opened with a popular town number, which was certain they'd never heard, watching the curious looks and expressions, as turned heads met, yet they didn't seem to

resent, nor turn down, in fact it was going along quite nicely, considering the usual sort of assorted audience one generally strikes in these rural villages.

The Parson prancing up, with a smile on his jib, saying he was pleased, not knowing the banjo was capable of producing such sweet tones, nor rendering such a class of music, so after the tea interval, gave another session for some considerable time, for the old gals seemed to like it, when the Son again connects on me to get away with him, saying you've already done enough, and not to over feed them.

Just tell you the Son was a birdie chap all right, quite taking a fancy to him, for he couldn't do enough to make me comfortable, steered me in for another, afterwards catching the seven something back, having had one of the oddest experiences in my career.

CHESTERFIELD HOUSE

CHAPTER XIII

CHESTERFIELD HOUSE

LORD AND LADY BURTON'S RECEPTION

CHESTERFIELD HOUSE ! Undoubtedly before its demolition was one of the most dignified of London's palatial homes, situated within the bosom of Mayfair, behind imposing gates, facing South Audley Street.

This commanding edifice contains numerous distinctive and spacious rooms, suitable for persons of high rank and position, and it's very gratifying to think that in this remarkable mansion was at one time installed England's beloved Princess Royal with her babies.

During the early nineties, when owned by Lord Burton, this famous house was frequently the scene of many gay and festive gatherings, for the Burtons not only possessed that unique gift of knowing just how to do the correct, but a pecuniary status, similar to the Croesus overplus.

The occasion, availing my opportunity of having a peep, being the Reception given in honour of H.R.H. The Duke

of Cambridge. Having been booked for this event, received word a few days previous to call and discuss various matters with Lady Burton.

Going round on the appointed morn, passing through those massive gates, screening the forecourt and mansion from passers by, was immediately escorted up that wonderful staircase to the Drawing-room, where her Ladyship was awaiting.

Lady Burton was exceedingly kind and charming in her manner, informing me this event was rather of some magnitude and importance, with large numbers of guests invited, her chief concern being where to install the stage for the performers.

Quickly summing up the two spacious rooms, virtually forming one, suggested placing the platform at the far end overlooking the terrace, so preventing any obstruction to the moving throngs.

Her Ladyship considered same practical, informing me the handling of the music would be left solely in my charge.

These grand rooms are exceptionally fine, opening off from such a beautiful hall and staircase, create a delicious imposing effect.

Notifying the Spanish Troupe (also engaged) to be on hand early, arrived likewise myself to supervise my part.

Passing through the long festooned awning, erected from curb to entrance, it was a sight to behold, when reaching

the Hall, seeming as if fairyland had been transplanted, with one suddenly and surreptitiously pushed into the Transformation Scene at a Drury Lane Panto, so dazzling were the lighting effects, the shooting rays glistening on the gold and ivory decorations, the gorgeous Staircase, bathed in a bevy of delicate and exquisite floral designs, decked out flunkies, looking as if suddenly dumped out the laundry basket, arrayed in braided coats, flounced shirts, cream waistcoats, knickers, and white washed hair, lent a most picturesque vista, proving by far the finest A l'Anglaise I'd ever yet run up against, and certain to have scraped the super tax off thousands of bottles of Bass.

The Drawing Rooms presented a veritable picture, the gorgeous tapestries, furniture, and ornaments, beaming in their various shades of colour, by the irradiations from the magnificent crystal chandeliers.

The Babes in the Wood would have been hard quitters, once they'd ever rooted here ; as for Antony, he'd never have glaciated his affection for Cleo. had he glimpsed her reclining on the exquisite divan in the far corner.

A charming stage had been erected, with rows of commodious chairs in front, arranged theatre fashion, the Invites now began trickling in, their Lord and Ladyship receiving at the summit of the stairs.

As they streamed into the rooms, the troupe played an appropriate seductive valse, several venturing forward, occupying our stalls, consequently started the Spaniards

troubadouring, with a charming little dark eyed donna executing a characteristic dance.

The assembly began increasing by leaps and bounds, with multitudes now pouring in, Dukes, Duchesses, Marquises, Marchionesses, Earls, Countesses, Lords and Ladies, etc., in fact not a single denomination of the Peerage catalogue had revoked.

Grand Dames and Ladies arrayed in the most wonderful and gorgeous toilets, both the last word and inch, masquerading with coiffures and necks bedecked with priceless pearls and sparklers of brilliant lustre, created a remarkable moving panoramic.

The buzzing clatter of animated tongues gradually increasing to such a deafening din, the outlook for music anything but cheery, still the show part had to be got on with, so ventured with a personal attempt, resulting in dire failure, for only a Salvation Band, salvoing the Gates of Hope and Glory, could ever have topped such an infernal noise; a few minutes later had another shot, ending as quickly as a Beckett-Carpentier scrap, the pianist's efforts being completely inaudible, so politely retired.

At that moment General Sir Arthur Ellis (Equerry to the Prince) strolled up, remarking :

Well ! Cammeyer ! You're up against a hard proposition this time !

You're right ! Sir Arthur ! It's virtually hopeless as things stand !

Presumably my capitulation had been noticeable to Lord Burton, for upon slightly turning, noticed his Lordship standing close by smiling, then presently moving closer, remarked in a kindly and sympathetic tone how truly sorry he felt for me, and even leaning nearer, whispered : " If the — and his illustrious — were singing a duet up there, these devils wouldn't keep quiet ! " Guess ! He wasn't far out !

Nothing remained to be done, but keeping the pot boiling, again turning on the Spaniards with a rouser, just letting the chatterers understand the entertainment party wasn't acknowledging defeat on any account.

Suddenly a drastic change swept the rooms, like a flash converse instantly ceasing, with everybody turning eyes, scanning the entrance, convincing me the Duke had arrived, so proving, for directly His Royal Highness entered, escorting Lady Burton, proceeding to the opposite corner of the main room.

The Duke ! Tall, heavily built, broad shouldered, and powerful anatomical frame, his true cut Saxon face carrying rather an expression of seriousness, as well as sincerity, yet gifted with that stately and commanding presence, gave still a further tone of dignity to this beau monde gathering.

With everybody standing closely clustered up, forming one deep human barrier, it became impossible to observe what was actually going on, with the view of the Duke completely lost, owing to a projecting partition, and as you are well aware, curiosity prevails in most beasts, likewise

being somewhat of the nosey persuasion myself, climbed on the platform endeavouring to focus my optics on the happenings.

My view from this elevation didn't reveal the best, but concluded from the movements of various ladies, presentations were taking place, for as they advanced, enacting a courteous courtesy, it seemed as if they ducked, disappeared, then bobbing up, somewhat similar to a nigger baptism.

All such customs, being entirely new and strange to myself, although I'd read of high officials kissing hands with the King, regards taking over some important appointment, giving me the impression something similar was possibly taking place here, still my surmising might have been clean off the track, still this little game went merrily on for some longish time, but sincerely trust if each did kiss His Royal Highness's hand, there wasn't an annoying blister on the Duke's duke the next morning.

Suddenly observing this ceremony was over, the congestion dispersing, conversations again resumed, in which the Duke diligently joined, the showing game became more feasible, our stalls quickly filling, with a large standing gallery bordering at the back, music at last getting a bit of its own back, the audience more inclined to lend a listening ear, we keeping the game going till well after midnight, before the Duke and many of the guests, retiring to the supper rooms below, then still leaving a large contingent to keep out of mischief.

Having just stepped off the platform, after playing, my attention was drawn to rather an eccentric looking Dame, who undoubtedly had picked up my wave length, although the distance between us was considerable, felt convinced by the position her lorgnette was held, myself was the object upon which her gaze was centred.

Dressed in beautiful grayish silk, contrasting effectively with an abundance of steel coloured hair, from which projected a long graceful aigrette, that would have made the most ardent lover of nicotine envious of as a pipe cleaner.

The age of this stately personage would be very difficult to judge, considering the space dividing us, but a random shot would put it somewhere between the periods of soda mints and pink ribboned night caps.

Becoming such a common occurrence at these functions, to have people coming up, asking all manner of questions, it so happening in this instance, for directly her movements signified advancement towards me, with the following, remark :

May I ask ! What instrument that is you're playing ?

A Zither Banjo ! Madam !

Very sweet toned ! quite delightful ! Should think ! rather nice to sing to !

Quite, Madam ! Patti uses one !

Does she really ?

Yes ! Had it made for her in America ! And it travels with her everywhere !

I used to sing a lot years ago, but suffer now from insomnia, often being awake very early mornings ! Was thinking one might easily sit up in bed, singing with such an instrument !

Quite a charming inspiration, Madam ! What style of song would you choose ?

Tosti's " Good Bye to Summer " ! Is my favourite ! Do you happen to know it ?

Very well, Madam ! It's delightful !

Have you ever met Signor Tosti ?

Have had that honour, Madam ! By the way, do you think you could reach those very high notes, sitting in such a posture ! (knowing there were several Mary-Janers).

Could but try !

Might possibly reach the sleeping servants, anyway !

Rather a good thing, dark winter morns !

Possibly better than an alarm clock ! Making more certain ! early tea !

Just imagine, 5 G.M., yelping " Good Bye to Summer " ! More likely good bye to housemaids !

It had gone one before Lady Burton again appeared on the scene, urgently requesting the remaining guests to adjourn for supper, her Ladyship expressing profuse thanks to the little old show, saying after such strenuous efforts refreshments must be gladly welcomed, and strolling down

the staircase together, her Ladyship commenting that, considering the difficulties encountered, thought the entertainment a huge success, many of the guests mentioning how much they enjoyed it.

The prima facia of the Supper Rooms revealed a truly magnificent Bacchanalian scenic, showing that Bacchus was certainly getting in the good work. Scores of massive silver candelabras, all alight-oh, holding dainty illuminated cream coloured shades, casting radiant rays on beautiful gowns and vivacious faces.

The Code of Ceremony having been crushed out of business by Fun of the Fair, merriment, laughter, and good fellowship of everybody, solely bent on enjoyment, the feast for the gods, on artistically decorated tables, displaying every conceivable viand a delicatessen outfit could put up, waiters galore, rushing about with long necked bottles in nighties, pouring forth an amber elixir, effervescing with such hilarious spirit, that when the glass to your lips was raised, the dancing bubbles broke forth on your face, like a barber's spray, with the coming at last of the six-inch Havanas, for those who were slaves to nicotine.

The rooms at last becoming so stuffy, strolled with two acquaintances into that lovely suite overlooking the terrace, here lounging this soft Junelet night in luxurious comfort, discussing the wonders of what had transpired, our conversations gradually becoming less and less, until the period was reached when silence ruled supreme.

In this mutely mutual sojourn, soliloquizing, quietly watching the coils of smoke gyrating in mysterious formations, hunting for the quickest escape into aerial spheres, we lingered until Mr. Dawn peeping over the fence of day-break, politely hinted :

Beat It !

And we did !

CORNEY GRAIN



CORNEY GRAIN

Copyright Elliott & Fry Ltd

CHAPTER XIV

CORNEY GRAIN

INCIDENTALLY had heard of this remarkable personality in the entertainment world, before leaving my native shore, having frequently read various press extracts, appearing in New York dailies, regarding his unique powers, but one is so apt to glance through such with an inclination to indifference, especially when one's own line is centred in other directions.

It so happened upon being engaged for a private function down in Kent, joined by my accompanist, travelled in one of those sporty scorching expresses, only allowed to stop at every station, for which this corner of the Old Country at that period was world famous, we scrambling into a carriage having about as much illumination as a taffy's village on a Sabbath, certainly the goods for a courting episode, for one could have squeezed his best girl to a pulp, without ever making her blush from fear of observance.

Merrily skidding along, bumping into all sorts of bergs, fancy hitting the Crystal Palace once or twice, at last reaching our destin., finding a covered conveyance awaiting,

pushed off into a dark dismal drive, impossible to obtain the slightest glimpse of England's greatest orchard, having frequently heard so much about, seeming at least a good half hour before turning into a drive, passing a lodge, presently reaching the edifice, a gentle tap soon putting the door ajar, being quickly escorted to the coat and hat deposit.

Upon strolling into a large hall, encountered the greetings of a very charming lady, turning out to be the hostess, who after expressing the profusest of welcomes, remarked : "Come along to the entrance of the drawing room ! Mr. Corney Grain is going to give a sketch."

Glancing down the room, observed reclining on a comfy chesterfield, directly opposite the piano, a huge man, appearing to possess as many square inches of avoirdupois as Barnum's celebrated Lady, for almost immediately this giant gracefully arose, moving towards the johanna, giving the stool a topping good spin, sat down gambolling up and down the keyboard, producing an extempo as delicious in its blending as a *pêche à la Melba*.

He's got 'em ! at once thought, even before uttering a word, like an electric shock shooting tingles through every nerve in one's anatomy, this colossus was treading the doms, at times so softly, leaving you wondering if wearing pneumatic gloves, bringing this short prelude into the masterpiece class, quickly putting the kyebosh on the busy wagging tongues, paving the way for his first utterance.

With his arm resting lightly on the instrument, quietly

announced he would endeavour to relate what occurred at a party, recently attended, instantly pouring forth glad-some patter, prolificly imaginary, intermingled with delightful musical squibs, flowing along with skilful satire, gradually developing into such a shower of humour, that he had one elderly dame in the far corner convulsed hysterically, being compelled to let up on the vocab., again amusing himself with the ivories, until composure had been restored.

Next giving an imitation of the society flapper, who played the banjo, singing a song intermingled with ping a ping a pong, and a ping pong ping, cleverly ridiculing that abortion of an instrument, as he understood it, winding up his first sketch with this skit, then flopping once more on the chesterfield.

After the audience had completed their eye wipings, again softening down from exhaustive laughter, the hostess suggested my doing a turn, to which naturally assented, this fact at once being announced, producing curious grimaces and facial contortions from one to the other, especially to be expected after Corney's lurid picture.

Quickly getting my Jo, moved down the room, countering Corney's frowning eye, casting a spot light on my instrument, taking not the slightest notice of his observance, got on with my job, rendering two excerpts. Corney all the time watching my fingers, sizing me up, undoubtedly bagging fresh material for future use.

After the usual short interval of prattle and cackle,

Corney again steps into the breach for his number twoser.

Once more did this generalissimo of the piano extend himself far beyond his previous performance, wading into the ductile waves of society, depicting the force of its breakers and undertow, slipping along with amazing cleverness, creeping through the crevices of fashion, citing its glamour, falsenesses, deceit, and emptiness, showing how well a good jolly on its horizon leaves you, then quietly caricaturing most every one present without their ever suspecting his personal allusions, for being so beautifully put and masked, there wasn't the remotest chance of a guesser cropping up, convincing me this was his great stunt de resistance, never before having seen nor heard it so cleverly handled.

At once made up my mind to make the acquaintance of this outstanding genius, for as the assembly strolled in to supper, followed to that part of the room where Corney had wandered, found him talking to the hostess, who noticing my presence close by, requested me to come over, at once being introduced.

After the usual salutations, Corney spoke kindly regards my banjo, saying that type of instrument was a complete revelation, asking various questions as to its origin, we at last sitting down to supper next one another, with my instantly noticing his enormous fingers, bewildering me how he ever got them on the keys, let alone over them with such perfect ensemble.

Asking me various questions as to how long I'd been in

London, also my intentions, which gladly unfolded, with his wishing me every success, coupled with a few useful hints, we continuing our conversation when journeying back to town to-gether in another of those never get sprinting trains, with my assisting him into a hansom at Charing Cross, expressing delight in making his acquaintance upon bidding him good night.

The London Season was shortly in full swing, and frequently was running up against Corney ; in fact, our two distinct types of show seemed to harness well to-gether, for remember a large reception given by Lady Quilter in South Audley Street, at which we were both engaged, it turning out such a dreadfully close night, after being 95 in the shade, although the spacious rooms were well aired, the crush of humanity making it almost impossible to move, with the atmosphere becoming positively stifling.

Corney was almost in collapse, when entering the small ante-room close to the stage, instantly asking if I'd noticed any fiz about, consoling him by offering to venture on a reconnoitre, going down to the dining room, ran against the butler, whom I'd previously met, so told him the tale quite successfully, for immediately up came a bottle of jump and a few glasses, which quickly did the trick, fully restoring Corney, who no sooner had he got on the stage, but began breaking them up, rolling off his quaint bits of humour, midst shrieks of laughter.

Hit up against him, quite by chance later on, for a rather well known Divine strolled into my agent's one day seeking

novelties and amongst the suggested, being my act, which after a lot of boosting got clinched, the Reverend taking away one of my circulars setting out various featured items.

The house in this case was rather a nice one, situated on the fringe of Regent's Park, hence when arriving at the abode, prompt to time, crept quietly up to the Drawing Room to get nicely in tune with the piano, concluding as it was in semi darkness, the gourmands were still busy, realizing fully well there would be nothing doing for some little time, so crept out crossing to the opposite to watch events.

Presently observed lights on the scene, people moving into the room, also several batches of non-feeders kept on arriving in hansoms, hastening my return in case of being wanted, so quickly ascending the stairs, decided to get a line on the bunch, finding the crack of the door obliging !

My Word !

It was the oddest collection of Eve and the Apple Brand I'd ever struck, for knocking around London, well on eighteen months, couldn't recall ever running against any tokens, or indeterminates, who could have successfully claimed a bean, as next of kin from any of them, all boilers, no roasters present.

The ladies' chests were well covered, with the noticeable exception of one rather Grande Dame, who was 50-50, appearing from the distance to possess a rather near friend in talcum. The men's kits, priceless, looking as if they'd given Willie Clarkson a busy time in the hiring department,

but the room seemed so infernally dull, hardly any converse, rather putting the soft pedal on one's performing inclinations.

Going into the small adjoining room, found my accompanist reading a card.

Hullo ! What's up !

Only the programme for to-night, and you're down first, for Gounod's Funeral March of a Marionette !

No, No, Pauline ! Nothing doing with Marion this eve ! We'll slip them the " Pas de Quatre " from Faust up to Date ! (which happened to be the rage of London).

Noticing my watch pointed past ten, without even a soul enquiring if we'd arrived, let alone ready to start, decided to get a move on, so followed by my pianist, glided down the room, curling round the Grande Dame before reaching the piano, losing no time, let go fortissimo with quick rhythm, the popular Meyer Lutz number, which certainly went well with the Grande Dame, for the moment it finished, swayed around with the brilliant remark :

" What charming music Gounod wrote ! "

Upon leaving the room, to my great surprise discovered Corney, so at once gave him a line on the type of mortal he'd have to face, with simply receiving a smiling nod in return, he not delaying his appearance, for slipping down the room, delivering a graceful courtesy, soon reached his perch, beginning in a soft-toned voice, with the

announcement, that his first presentation would be his experiences at a Sunday School Treat, with myself watching his facial expressions through the obliging crack.

Leading off with a portrayal of the little kiddies' pleasures, amusements, and glee derived from the occasion, gradually working up to the grown-ups, poking fun at every one, from the parson, curate, and teachers, etc., it being all purely innocent, intermingled with atmospheric wit, infusing his piano work with delicious improvizations containing hymn-like chords and harmonies, fitting the picture perfectly.

Then getting away with another clever caper, up and down the doms, venturing once more on the satire stunt of which he was certainly the past master, conjuring this time with Queer Sets, and Sects, soon having them well humming, playing on their peculiarities, actions, and get-ups perfectly, never giving the ghost of a semblance he was shooting his subtleties direct, certainly a masterpiece in cleverness and conception, with his font of imagination and invention simply amazing, being so deliciously rolled off, without the slightest hesitation or hunting for a word.

With the show over, everyone strolled down stairs for refreshments, the Reverend coming to the small room, offering profuse thanks and approval of our various efforts, also insisting upon our joining the feasters, the latter invite being especially welcomed by myself, feeling both tired and thirsty, so ventured along, noticing a buffet at the far end

of the dining room, started wading my way through the crush, which by degrees succeeded, ultimately reaching the counter, parking in front of an enormous bowl containing sliced lemons and cherries swimming the channel, but wanting a pussyfoot thirst before getting chummy with it, for it certainly didn't entice me as an invigorator, hence moved over to the end where a huge waiter was sentried, whispered : If there was any fiz moving ?

'Ad no horders yet ! to uncork !

being his sole rather frosty reply.

Realizing the chance was rather remote in satisfying my fancy, decided to quit it, and did, never once catching a sight of Corney, guessed he'd done ditto.

This was about the last occasion was ever out with Corney, for shortly afterwards he was seized with a serious illness, proving far too much for his constitution to combat, quietly passing away.

So Poor Corney's gone ! was the grieved remark tendered by most everyone you met, for his kindliness and outstanding genius had filtered into the hearts of thousands, both young and old, they loved him for his bigness, gentleness, and happiness he infused into all who listened to his art, for art it certainly was, the very highest, never in all my travels having ever heard any entertainer at the piano who could be compared, he was simply unique.

Often wished he could have been spared to have had a crack at the Yanks. Wouldn't they simply have loved him, going dotty over his spontaneous wit ; can vividly

picture him with his huge frame poking fun at their Corn Beef Hash, circuiting the big country with a grip, wearing searchlight specs, for it's almost a cert., had he at last got hitched up to the White House harpsichord, would soon have Mr. President on the hop, cracking ice and shaking cocktails, until he'd possibly forgotten the number of twinklers in the corner of Old Glory, with even Uncle Sam indulging in a hair cut, simultaneously enjoying the Smile.

THE OLD PELICAN CLUB

CHAPTER XV

THE OLD PELICAN CLUB

THIS notorious Pot House, tucked away within that little old world cutting called Denman Street, just at the back of Piccadilly Circus, was the resort of the oddest pot-pourri of cosmopolitan life imaginable, the evergreen proverbial saying of Duke to Commoner, doesn't half portray the curious nucleus of the masculine gender, constituting its membership, for if you led off with Dukes, Marquises, Earls, Lords, Knights, Ambassadors, all denominations of army and naval officers, barristers, lawyers, bankers, musicians, and actors, etc., you wouldn't have enumerated one quarter of the shines represented in the sub. list of this abode.

In the way of palatialness, its pretensions was certainly mighty small parmesan, virtually only consisting of one spacious room, for as you slid through the baize door, you struck same, with a commodious bar at the end, but if that had been missing, or taken away, every habitat would have slung in his resignation at once, not that this fixture was ever abused, for being such a solace and comfortable repose to rest against, when weary and tired, it became

exceedingly popular on that account alone, never once having heard of any member having more than forty-two whiskies and sodas in one afternoon.

Presume you wish to know how this old bird came to hit it! Wull! It was my agent's suggestion, thinking it might possibly benefit my career, dragged me along one Sunday night, when a Smoker was in session, with Cecil Raleigh, the dramatist, installed in the Chair.

Upon arrival found the show buzzing along in full swing, giving me the chance to size up the audience, consisting of a couple of hundred white breasted Knuts, adorned with wide winged butterfly ties, listening most attentively to a song being rendered by no other than Teddy Lonnen of Gaiety Theatre fame.

Immediately it was concluded, was introduced to the Chairman, who in his profuse welcome, wanted to treat me to the contents of the bar, also mentioning if it would be asking too much to play next, to which succeeded in keeping dry on the first half, but acquiesced on the tother, my efforts proving possibly somewhat to their liking, being greeted with considerable enthusiasm, hence requested to do another, when the moment finishing, up jumps the Chairman, after lively use of his miniature hammer, making complimentary remarks about my banjo, winding up with putting a resolution to the members, proposing my becoming an honorary member from now on, which was instantly seconded and carried unanimously, so there was another full blown Pelican within the space of half an hour.

Why christened Pelican was somewhat mystifying, not being a cracker jack authority on the peregrinations of this *rara avis* of feathers, having no more conception of its inclinations and psychology, than a lobster has of a crow, whether it prefers nocturnal to daylight saving, but presumably it does, if the Birds of this Crib are any criterion, whether its tastes are pluvial or parched, convinced they're most certainly the former, for one would be a double dyed jackass to ever take out a policy against getting wet in this ranch, likewise throwing premiums away on one covering total abstinence.

No ! the only little old policy to quietly steer was The All in, Be careful ! for temptations were shied at you like hailstones.

Don't run away with the idea that this shack was a debauch, for it was nothing of the sort, being purely a social meeting haunt of some of the finest sporting gentry of Old England, who although members of the most exclusive clubs in town, where certain standards of etiquette, possibly due to ancient traditions, being somewhat conformed to, enjoyed congregating here, where they could vent with far greater freedom their feelings of affability, yet still retaining their Etonian manners.

A large element of the coaching division, as Tally Ho-ing during the Pelicans' time, was a sport in great vogue, finding such famous whips as Beckett, Broadwood (known as Swish), Cozier, Blyth, and Dickey the Driver, mostly joint drivers of the renowned "Old Times,"

invariably daily frequenters, being no uncommon sight to see three or four of these equipages drawn up outside during afternoons, one brave silly dude, of rather the By Jove, Ha Ha, Don't you know frame up, used to actually dare driving his private Four in Hand from Long's Hotel in Bond Street to this den, becoming the terror to the police regulating Piccadilly Circus, continually getting his leaders tied into knots at this crossing, causing a chaotic tangle, receiving unparliamentary epigrams from other drivers, for creating a circus within a circus.

The thought of Coaching Days recalls my first Derby in '89, and What er ! What a Day ! a covey of sixteen of us having combed out our feathers early agreed on assembling at the Club, at that unholy hour of 8.30 G.M., and well remember strolling round, finding the "Old Times," polished up to the pink, standing outside, waiting for the fray, the famous team of Grays, peevish with excitement, pounding the pavement with nervy hoofs, grooms holding fast, preventing them tearing off on their lonesomes, they fully realizing it was Derby Day, lor bless yer ! every knacker in the kingdom knows when the first Wednesday in June butts in, it's natural to their own horsey nomenclature, being as wise to it as knowing when their number's up for the sausage machine.

It wasn't long before the full muster turned up, including our skipper, Dickey the Driver, we making a good start indoors, with the toxicologist behind the bar serving anti-somnific champagne cocktails, just to keep the bunch from

becoming noctambulic, when upon hearing the pathetic peals of the post horn, scrambled out, mounting in less than two ticks, were swinging along old Piccadilly, it proving a wonderful day above, and none too bad on our perch, for the old coach being such a well known landmark, bus and hansom drivers, all along the route, bedecked in their best racy toppers, with tiny blue bows on whips, were on the qui vive to catch a glimpse of us, for undoubtedly there is a mutual bond between all lovers of horse flesh, for as we scampered along, whips were raised, saluting, intermingled with yells of "Good Luck," which our boat load vociferously acknowledged.

To me, simply captivating, winding down those thoroughfares of suburbia, the sounds from the coach horn bringing occupants of houses to their windows, some waving handkerchiefs, others dusters, even kiddies in prams shaking tiny hands, horses attached to every conceivable type of vehicle turning heads with sorrowful expressions of Lucky Dogs, You ! look at poor me.

Putney Bridge, alive with humanity, when passing over, mixed in the congestion and turmoil of one incessant mass of moving conveyances of every description, all heading for the same goal, proving to the initiated green horn, the greatest part of the fun, for the road scenes in the Old Derby Days were paramount.

For the moment, having kissed this bridge good bye, you instantly began landing in the thick of it, the roads packed with charabancs, carriages, dogcarts, hansom,

wagons, and donkey chaises, all trekking on the long, long trail, yet upon hearing the spirited bursts from the post horn, and clatter of hoofs behind, their rule of the road etiquette, reminds them to pull towards the curb, making room for your galloping past, simply just what happened, when taking that stiffish hill up to Wimbledon Common at full pelt.

At Worcester Park we changed teams, and the parched state of our tongues, again making off for Ewell, where we prolonged our stay, owing to the accumulated traffic congestion, but it was a merry picture, watching the various types of humanity, discussing their views on the winner, and mind you they all had it for a cert., even that time in the day, venting their positiveness with frequent quenchers.

Running into Epsom Village, found it literally teeming with excitement, the thoroughfares packed with buzzing crowds, both human and horseflesh, all tangled together, making our passage through almost an impossibility, the prowling masses paying little heed to the saluting sirens from the horn, simply crowding round the coach, in jocular mood, hailing us with all sorts of efficacious epigrams and jargon, which good humour we treated with discretionary chippings, for within such a blockade, progression was snail-like, taking considerable time before striking the road verging towards the downs, when the team broke into a gentle canter up the long irksome climb, all the while scores of dirty kids of both sexes performing cart wheels and somersaults, for pennies, along the footpath.

Reaching the summit, a kaleidoscopic panorama stared us in the face, the Grand Stand in the offing, glittering in its enamelled whiteness, flags and bunting fluttering in the breeze, tiers of private boxes, all bedecked in crimson coverings, waiting no doubt for Princes, Princesses, and other nobility, throngs by the thousands, young, old, and indifferent, half on foot, the other above wheels, wending their way to some point of vantage, to witness the greatest event in the history of horse.

Our destination having been pre-arranged, Dickey flicking his leaders, the guard synchronizing with a fortissimo tally-ho, scattering the hoofing mob in front, away we flew, almost Derby pace, up the hilly heath, coming to anchor in a favourable spot, directly opposite the Grand Stand, never in my life witnessing such a pandemonium and noise, resembling a barrage of French seventy-fives, spluttering forth, coming from every conceivable sort of mechanical device, merry go rounds, hand organs, niggers, gypsies, intermingled with bookies, yelping out the most generous odds, almost making you a present of the dough, according to their lingo, still amongst all this infernal clatter there was a certain essence of charm, when one summed up the entire surroundings, remindful somewhat of good old Coney.

A spanking alfresco lunch, well sprayed with a delicious vintage jump, put the party in high glee, before the racing commenced, which to me, whence beginning, didn't appeal nor cause much excitement, knowing nothing of gee-gees

or jockeys, my attention becoming entirely absorbed in the Fun of the Fayre, being such a distinct novelty, for Epsom Downs on Derby Day stands unique, nothing like it elsewhere, for if one is a keen racer, deliberately bent on viewing the actual running, nothing short of a seat in the Stand will suffice, for mighty difficult otherwise to spot the runners, owing to the density of the concourse, both people and vehicles.

The big noise on the heath generally abates a bit just before the classic event is run, for even the showing fraternity seem to pay respect to this noted spectacle, simmering down their screeching machines until the winner's past the post, when they again renew with double vigour the moment the lucky gee is proclaimed.

With this event over, the majority appear to lose interest in the remaining races, start moving about, watching the antics, amongst the booths, fakirs, and other guys, for returning time is creeping on, which actually seemed even more enjoyable than the drive down, naturally there were more unsteadies amongst the mobs, where changing teams, but the majority happy and good tempered, our scamper home being accomplished in very fast time, passing over twenty coaches on the way, arriving at the club just after six-thirty, never one bit fatigued, for after a substantial repast, played for a stag party in Stratton Street, given by Granville Farquhar, finding the two Coventry boys there, Aubrey and Arthur the Official Starter, Lord Cholmondeley, and Lord William Beresford, turning out an exceedingly

cheery evening, and from the hilarity, fancy the lot pinched the winner ; lucky dogs, won on Spratts.

By road to the Derby nowadays is simply pure bosh compared with forty years ago, for since petrol machines were invented conditions have entirely altered, cutting out the entire charm, even witnessing this classic, with myriads of manceuvring tin jammed to-gether, both sides of the course, reminds you of Piccadilly with the traffic held up, the runners galloping down the centre ; without doubt, the picturesqueness of the world's greatest race has vanished for ever.

Boxing during the winter months was the principal Sunday midnight attraction, generally preceded by many cheery little dinner parties, the Café Royal being the most favoured spot, for it wasn't uncommon to see well on a hundred Pelicans dotted about the spacious main salon of this well known resort, in clusters, lingering over coffees, liqueurs, and cigars till well gone eleven, before strolling round for the fracas.

The ring was pitched in the centre of the large room, with a fringe of seats encircling, the organizing of these fistic encounters being left to Johnnie Fleming, a well known impresario of "The Game with the Dukes," the head towel fanner, bottle swigger, and sponge juggler, no other than the notorious wing eared Barney Sheppard, it being considered amongst the fistic pugs such an honour to get the chance of shoving their noses in at this dive, that it was seldom anything but a good display, for Johnnie

had all the East End Spiders, Bermondsey Midgets, and Kids by the dozens to select from, and if some chesty aspirant suddenly crops up, obsessed, so he thinks, with the magnetic optic, only to focus the peeper on his opponent and see him immediately wilt, why the old war horse, Felix Scot, the black, was pulled in to cool down the "Would Be's" circulation.

Felix was certainly a character, though a bit on the tobasco when fully steamed up, not quite so hot on the magic flute as his namesake the Cat, but equally as clever with the magic right, possessing like most niggers abnormally long arms, undoubtedly being a distinct advantage, for frequently after allowing his opponent to kindly present him with an assorted series of thud-like clumps on all parts of his cocoanut, thinking he'd the nigger whipped to a custard, he'd suddenly pop in a right swung mit, on the White's boko, with such a jehovian jolt, that the front benchers were lucky if escaping a few spraying drops of nature's vital juice.

The Marquis of Queensberry (Q.), originator of the three minute round, frequently officiated as referee, generally sitting beside the Mate (Sir John Astley), the latter acting as time keeper, well remembering the Peter Jackson and Jim Smith set-to, Dixon and Wallace, also numerous other famous scraps.

The slogging over about two, the ring quickly dismantled and removed, the room aired, furniture normally restored, with suppers beginning to be served, large numbers

dallying on late, venting their conviviality midst an abundance of Have Another atmosphere, with no doubt a few awakening the next morning, wishing the North Pole was adjacent.

Billiards was the favourite indoor game, cards being barred, and amongst the members were some of the super-amateur cueists of England, and when a brace of these top-notchers met, to test their individual powers, many exciting and sporting contests were witnessed, with often appreciable stakes involved, for the club being strictly a members' abode, there was never any chance of the sharpening element worming itself in.

Naturally they insisted upon initiating yours truly to this fascinating pastime, but never having seen or played the English game, my efforts at first proved dudful. No matter what the offered start, the result invariably meant my being the non victor, yet such state of affairs fortunately didn't last long, for having done considerable cue work in America, the knowledge acquired from the strictly cannon game soon came to my rescue, with the long start offerers beginning squealing, cutting down the vantages.

Black Pool with the Pink up, was the favourite on No. 1 table most every afternoon, three bob the black, two the pink, with shilling lives, creating a great rush after lunch by the non-players scrambling for the choice seats, hence the gallery was always packed, the contestants more or less a regular bunch, consisting generally of five, myself

included ; the terror of this little coterie was Joe Duncan, who raced under the nom de plume of Kilsyth, owning that famous gee "Euclid," winning the Jubilee at Kempton, with Joe cleaning the Ring up to the tune of many thousands.

Joe being of rather dark complexion, was nicked "Nigger," but he was certainly the Sport, as game as you cast "'Em," also the hottest blackpooler I've ever struck, possessing such a superabundance of confidence, at times took over dangerous risks, that alone being his only weakness.

Another mustarder was Dick Greenland (Dick Deadeye), but a far more cautious player, hence travelling in such company, wanted substantial backing, but always had a bevy of supporters, fancying my chances, the principal being Carnation Dolly, who'd slip me a tenner to get on with, the winnings, if any, we divided at the wind up, each game being a thirty minute session.

On one occasion we were plodding along, with mighty little doing, when Lord Churston (Johnnie) turns up on the scene, walking straight up to me, saying :

See here ! Old Sackbut ! What'll cost, to have a flutter in the next ?

You keep out of it, My Lord ! It's far too sultry for your class, unless you've a tenner to blow !

Oh ! You think so ! Well, I'm on, quite willing to chance it !

His Lordship wasn't half a bad cueist, but don't think I'm under-rating his game when saying he'd no business with this bunch, still he thought differently, so that's his cremation.

The balls were thrown out, myself getting the White, meaning the lead off, Nigger's turn being last, with His Lordship's just in front, His Lordship started doing biz at once, for Dick offered half a dollar for his ball and connected, for both Deadeye and self always endeavoured to get Nigger sandwiched between us, to keep the curb on him, for if he got the game opened up, every trip, he'd have every quid in your pocket.

It wasn't till the third time round that anything startling happened, for with Deadeye to play, having nothing on, doubled a ball to crab Nigger, whose own ball lay at the balk end, less than a foot off the top cushion. Nigger's outlook certainly no sinecure with only the yellow on for the bottom pocket, laying in line with the Black on its middle spot, still a toss up, if it would clear another ball on its way.

Nigger having a squint at it, cried out: "What Price the Yellow?" A bencher jumping up also eyeing it! Nigger again shouts: "Take twenties!" "Done," says the bencher.

Nigger having another peep, draws back his cue, letting fly, jamming the Yellow down at sixty miles p.h., with loads of stab screw on, leaving himself a birdie position on the Black, immediately sinking same, gaining an easy one on

the Pink, stuffing it in, with plenty of screw back, leaving a sitter once more on the Black, again repeating the dose, and again, and again, with the rest of us wondering what we were in for, each dubbing out his silver, then picking it up and planking down gold, then silver again, followed by more quids, still Nigger sailed on midst intense excitement, especially amongst the gallery, where many little side bets always flitted about, for Nigger now set was certainly putting it across in great style, making us nervously watching the clock, hoping the Marker would yelp time, but no such luck.

On he scorched, never losing position, the table looking as if he'd worn a groove in the cloth, most of us completely forgetting the number of sequences he'd ticked off, the Marker alone knowing the tally, when at last not securing such a good posish on the Pink, was compelled to cut it fine, dribbling it, but it hung on the brink, accompanied by a long drawn sigh, developing into a terrific war whoop from the benchers, the total proving fourteen Blacks and the like Pinks, setting the rest of the bunch back just three pounds ten each, undoubtedly the greatest effort of its kind I've ever witnessed, without the faintest shadow of a fluke, truly a remarkable performance.

Everybody appeared flabbergasted, never once dreaming such a thing possible, for nothing approaching it had ever occurred before, constituting a record amongst Pelicanites, with Nigger as placid over the achievement as if it'd never happened, it taking several minutes to get the squaring up

straightened out, being my turn to play, and in hand.

Had a cinch on Nigger's ball for the side, which quickly lopped, leaving an easy Black, giving this a good home, played the Pink in the jaws, with cushion first, leaving my own with great good luck in Nigger's groove behind the Black.

Could I even give a poor imitation of Joe, I wondered, purloining the Black, securing posish on the Pink, downed it, screwing again behind the Black, repeating the dose several times, ultimately failing on a Black, another hilarious shout going up when the Marker calls nine Blacks and Pinks.

Poor Johnnie looked bewildered, but never crestfallen, being far too good a sportsman, for having to dub up on twenty-three Blacks and Pinks in two goes, was certainly a wee bit thick, declaring jokingly we'd hived it for him, and at the close had only a dollar left of the estimate.

Sporty billiards, played for appreciable stakes, wasn't an unfrequent occurrence, specially amongst the racing contingent, habitually used to punting heavily on the turf; thought it kid's play to have fifty or a hundred jimmies on a two hundred and fifty upper, for on one occasion, a cluster of about a dozen of us were dining, when Nigger turns up, evidently from the smile on his jib, experienced a good day, likewise exuberantly optimistic, in fact full of beans, quietly joining our group, starts ragging and pulling our legs in sheer fun, declaring we're a lot of has-beens, knowing nothing about anything.

Presently directing his remarks towards myself, desired to hear if I fancied my chances against him in five hundred ! Nothing doing ! was quickly my retort, fully realizing anything less than a lengthy start would be useless, but Jimmy Davis (Owen Hall of Geisha fame) butts in with : Cammy will play you a hundred cannons up, each cannon counting one, for a pony of my coin, and a pony of mine chips in Tom Wilson, make it two says Joe, and three retorts Wilson, done says Nigger, who also obliged one or two others, fancying a flutter on the Sackbut.

Upon being asked if agreeable to play, said didn't mind, in fact thought it great fun engaging in such a titanic struggle, with such a huge amount hanging on the result, amounting to actually over three hundred, knowing none of the punters would cast any aspersions on my form, being far too good sports, in case I didn't crawl in the pit up to their expectations.

The news of this contest spread through the club like fire, drawing a huge gallery, which we found assembled when uncasing our cues, with myself being fully alive to the likelihood of Nigger playing at his best when stakes are big, being exactly the game he relishes.

There wasn't any time wasted before starting, myself winning the string, hence the opening shot, which scoring made first blood for the Yank, besides knowing Nigger's game, the only possible chance of downing him was playing crafty, with a bit of diplomatic finessing, endeavouring to tie him up with difficult shots.

Nigger wasn't taking many risks either, continually leaving me in the middle of the green with each of the other balls at opposite ends, or else tucked up under the verandah, for the cushions in those days weren't so low nor the balls as large.

On we plodded, each doing our damndest to crab one another, for as an individual cueist, confess Joe was streets ahead of myself, but possessing more knowledge of the cannon game, if once they came my way, realized it was my only chance, still ding dong we crept along, first Nigger in front, then myself, until towards the last, he crept away, only wanting ten to pip me, myself a dozen in arrears.

Now feeling great confidence in his lead, ventures out for a three cushion one, none too difficult, but catching the side bump of the middle, his ball coming straight into the open, leaving me a cinch in a drop cannon, which connected, bunching the ivories at the same time, spot end, ultimately piling a break of fourteen, taking the lead midst terrific excitement, and cheers from the gallery, with more betting offers flying about, still Nigger promptly slips on a couple, again tying, followed by a quiet period neither getting any further, for several strokes, both being afraid to concentrate too much in pulling off the shot, sacrificing safety.

Just then, picked up a brace, followed by Joe missing, then pulling off a nice two cushioner, the balls fell nicely, leaving me a birdie game, running out a winner by eight,

midst a bedlam of noise, certainly proving a most exciting battle, yet Nigger wasn't satisfied, the pluckant asking for revenge, hence my backers being agreeable, we started another, this proceeding in virtually the same routine like the former, except more luck coming my way, pulling it off by seventeen.

Joe shelled out the dough like a bird, smiles all over him, saying he'd like to play me twenty-five up, offering me a start of three, which my supporters thought a soft proposition, but personally turned it down, confessing he'd certainly win, for the reason that only in the long game had the opportunity to daringly venture, endeavouring to bunch them.

This match playing for high stakes was never any pleasure, nor enjoyment, to me, in fact the reverse, hence thereafter did everything possible to avoid being drawn in, for no matter how carefully you go about such things, there is generally some unkind individual who unfortunately puts an entirely wrong construction on your actions, inclined at times to almost intimate that it's possibly a lucrative business, and not desiring to be classified in that category, decided to sidestep all such fixtures in the future.

One intensely exciting contest, starting about midnight, between two keen cueists, both fine players, and equally good sportsmen, each capable of popping on his hundred, began playing two-fifty ups, for a fiver aside, proving a most evenly matched struggle, with many of us watching them

long past three in the morning, yet only one game the dif when personally left, feeling it might be daybreak before quitting.

Coming into the club the next day after lunch, enquired of the bartender if he'd heard how the great match finished !

Why ! They're still at it, never once stopping, so going up found them a bit deshabelle, yet still game, with dark marks across the right side of their white waistcoats, where the cue had rubbed, also finding out they'd knocked one Marker hors de combat, having to count for themselves for several hours, when upon finishing the game they were contesting, agreed to toss, seeing if they'd continue or stop, heads to quit, tails continue, with heads turning up, leaving still the only monetary difference between them a lonely fiver.

The most amusing entertainments were liable to crop up most any evening, especially after the pros. turned up from the theatres, with never a chance of becoming dull or bored, for such unforeseen events were continually transpiring, never forgetting one red letter night, when Teddy Solomon of Comic Opera fame, Fred Leslie, Arthur Roberts, and Hughie Drummond, one of the greatest wits England has ever known, all happened to fall in about the same time. Teddy strolling towards the johanna, commenced running over the doms, with that notorious silky liquid touch he was so famed for, improvizing catchy themes, as he dreamed along, mighty soon bringing the

others alongside him, presently developing into an impromptu comic opera, each making up original spontaneous verses, as they carried on, chock full of amazing wit and cleverness, the lot being past masters at the game, solos, duets, trios, and quartettes intermingled together, bringing in skits, both political and public, with a few very hot personalities thrown in.

These off hand frivolities, often materializing into actualities for frequently amongst the listeners would be George Edwardes, Henry Leslie, on the theatre side, with Pettitt, Owen Hall, and Cecil Raleigh on the dramatists' side, everyone of them on the alert to spot any clever bit, suitable for the basis to work on in their own constructions.

Amongst the noted composers who were often inclined to sit at the old domino box and play was Lionel Monckton, who frequently entertained us with mostly his own writings, and upon one occasion after he'd quietly indulged in close on an hour's recital, entirely his own works, Arthur Roberts walks over to him, saying :

"See here, Lionel, Old Sport ! By way of a change, let's have something by Monckton !"

Poor Albert Chevalier was simply in a wretched state of rocky nerves, the Sunday night before making his debut on the Music Hall the following Monday, intimating with a sorrowful drawn countenance that he felt his act was doomed to failure, we all nursing him with every kind of encouragement, endeavouring to comfort and pacify his stupid delusions, feeling certain such an unique artist

couldn't possibly prove but a huge success, at last working him up, persuading him to sing us the new songs, promising to pass our candid opinion and judgment, consequently he rendered the lot, which we all proclaimed truly wonderful, yet mighty difficult to rouse his spirits sufficiently into believing it, hence consoled him by saying we'd all be in the audience as he first steps on, greeting his appearance with such tumultuous applause, certainly loosening the plaster on the ceiling, but it proved as we surmised, totally unnecessary, for Chivy hadn't sung four bars before he'd the whole house spellbound, and with him, which history confirms as being one of the greatest artistic successes that ever faced the glare of footlights.

It was indirectly through such a variety of happenings, that the Pelican became such an amusing and entertaining proposition, and the remark describing it best, came from the lips of one of the prominent chosen, who proclaimed it :

“The Best Viver's Vorth in Town !”

A CLOSE SHAVE

CHAPTER XVI

A CLOSE SHAVE

A VENOMOUS brute is the most treacherous object one can ever bump up against, for it's a toss up regards being made a present of his poisonous spite.

Having been given instructions to proceed to Stockbridge, departed one afternoon to perform after dinner for C. D. Guthrie's house party, for the well known race week.

Arriving at this wayside station, found a conveyance waiting to pick up my accompanist and self, hence we buzzed off at once, it turning out a glorious summer day, with the drive through this charming part of picturesque country proving exceedingly enjoyable.

Upon reaching the domain, rather a grumpy servant collared our belongings, depositing the lot in a large hall containing a has-been billiard table.

Upon enquiring if Mr. Guthrie was about, was informed, in an insolent manner, "He was possibly, somewhere in the garden," with a finger being pointed to a door leading to same.

Taking not the slightest notice, nor resenting the attitude

of this flunkey, proceeded through, at once noticing a number of people in the distance, and upon strolling across the lawn, with the view of reporting my arrival, perceived a gentleman advancing, turning out to be the desired person, who immediately enquired if I'd come to perform, and upon assuring him such was correct, said he'd given instructions regarding my welfare, arranging sleeping accommodation at the village inn, as his house party had exceeded his anticipation, but a room would be provided here to change, also the comfort of dining.

For all such, naturally thanked him, assuring everything would be made ready, whenever he required me to play, returning to the hall, explained the details to my accompanist, saying we must take it easy for a bit, awaiting events, here lounging about close on two hours, when suddenly the same flunkey, in butler's attire, burst into the hall, saying : " Do you want yer grub before yer play, or after ? " Answering in a perfectly quiet tone, said : " We'd prefer dining first ! "

With that he flits out, slamming the door, after a further twenty minutes, he again re-enters, yelling out :

" Yer grub's ready, come this way." Leading us through a back passage to the servants' hall, with my optic at once spotting the table having a musty looking soiled cloth, spread over with none too clean requisites, set out for two.

Presently in comes a small kitchen lad, planking down a large silver salver, with about a dozen tired looking whitebait, lolling about, so said to the urchin : " Kindly

bring two serviettes," the joker buzzing off, down another passage, with my overhearing him tell the butler our requirements, which instantly brought forth in a beastly tone : " Take them a couple of bally dish towels.

Immediately rising, said to my pianist : " Come out of this. We'll go back to the hall ! " and did, my friend remarking : " What a bounder ! " " Yes, a terror ! But take no notice ! I'll handle this job ! "

Here we patiently waited, well over an hour, without seeing a soul, listening to the faint sounds emanating from the small orchestra that was playing during the house party's dinner, not even the brute of a butler once showing his face.

It was distinctly difficult to formulate, or arrive at any decision, as to the best thing to do, not wanting to create any friction, nor disturb the host and his party, deciding on further laying dog-o.

Suddenly a chap comes through another door, who fortunately I knew, being Willy Low, the race horse owner, who upon spotting me, said ! " Hullo, Cammeyer ! What the devil you doing here ! " Hence informed him, in the most concise form, what had actually transpired, he replying : " Never mind for the moment, come up to my room, where you can both change, and I'll have some sandwiches, and a bottle of jump, brought into the drawing room, as we'll be ready for you in twenty minutes, as the band's just off ! "

The drawing room, charmingly lit, with the house party

sitting about, full of merriment and laughter, made one rather forget the unpleasant incident we'd gone through, and considering neither of us had broken bread since lunch time, it was surprising the good show we put up with our first two numbers, for upon concluding, heard a voice say:

"Here you are, Cammeyer!" So, turning, spotted Willy Low pouring out two bumpers of bubbly, which very soon ended up in a choice cosy corner of both our anatomies, for abstaining from food so long, all hunger anguish had flown, leaving a bone dry thirst.

Noticing by the side of the fiz bottle the promised sandwiches, partook of one, but fancying it tasted a bit coppery, remarked same to my pianist, who feeling so darned famished, said he didn't notice anything, started in consuming a large number, hence rather comforted by his verdict, tried my luck with another, at once feeling convinced it wasn't what it ought to be, shifted onto biscuits.

We played on and off till close on midnight, but at the finish, my accompanist complained of feeling chilly, immediately starting to shiver, so knowing we'd over a mile drive in an open cart, borrowed a cover coat from Low, to slip him into, promising to return same to White's Club in town.

Arriving at the old Inn, got the venerable party in charge to fork out some cold ham, bread and cheese, which we set on to, with a vengeance, but my friend still shaking like

a cheap jelly, got him the best brandy the place possesses, but it wasn't eau de vie, but brewer's grog, still it warmed his cockles up a bit, we eventually retiring about two.

Awaking in the early morn, feeling rotten with sharp pains flitting through my tummy, overheard groaning and moaning coming from my pianist's room, hence rushing in, found he'd been violently ill with dreadful nausea, complaining of acute gastric pains and bursting head, so crept down collaring the old brandy bottle, giving him a good hooker, which seemed to slow things down a bit, at last sort of soothing him for the time being.

It's that Butler ! That's done this !

Do you think so ?

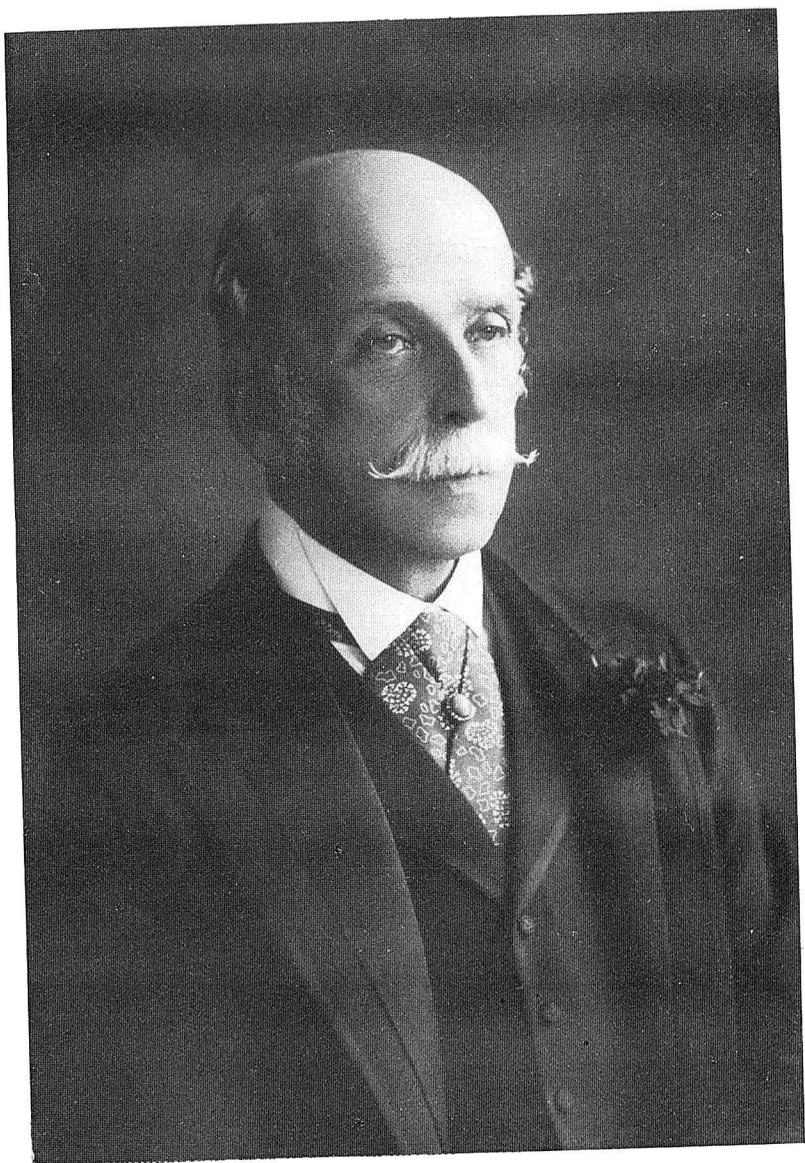
Yes, the swine ! He's poisoned us ! With verdigris !
I'll gamble on it !

Both of us were far too ill to catch the early train, not getting away till the following evening, and even then with my accompanist upon reaching home being confined to his bed, for several days, with his doctor quite concerned about him, fully corroborating my convictions, regards the poisoning, saying action should be taken at once against this scoundrel, but realizing the difficulty to drive home the proof, and the useless expenditure on solicitors, etc., knew it was a thankless task, unless it became so serious to become a policeman's job.

Decided first to write Low, then thought better of it, knowing I was sure to run against him at the club, when

boxing was on, but fortunately hit up against him at Houghton Hall, where he was one of Viscount Grey de Wilton's shooting party, during the following November, for when chatting with him, asked if he got his cover coat safely, then referring to the incident, gave him a lucid account of what actually happened, declaring the butler was the cause, with his answering : "That he wouldn't be surprised, for he happened to be his own personal servant, engaging him only the week previous to the Stockbridge party, but turning out such an arrant liar and thief, kicked him out !" then again saying : "If it's any consolation to you, Cammeyer, you can rejoice in his being in quod, for he recently got three years !" My only comment being : "Thank God !"

MR. ALFRED DE ROTHSCHILD



MR. ALFRED DE ROTHSCHILD

Copyright Elliott & Fry Ltd

CHAPTER XVII

MR. ALFRED DE ROTHSCHILD

Most everybody in their own sphere of life has at some opportune moment experienced that peculiar mysterious tinge of delight, that seems unconsciously to waft spasmodically through one's system, creating joy, sympathy, and respect, when coming in contact with some super-human force, so intensely impressionable, immediately conveying the idea of being a distinctive personality.

That's just what struck me of Mr. Alfred de Rothschild, after my first few minutes' conversation with him, simply captured by his simplicity, and charm of manner, for in the early nineties, no more prolific dispenser of hospitality existed in the whole of England than Mr. Alfred, universally so called, Royalty, Nobility, and foreign diplomats continually gracing and honouring him with their presence, for at both his London home and Halton, his country estate in Buckinghamshire, it seemed one incessant string of receptions, dinners, and week-end parties.

His town house being situated in that sort of cul-de-sac, or courtyard, at the far end of Curzon Street, Mayfair,

known as Seamore Place, Mr. Alfred's share being No. 1, certainly a palatial mansion, furnished in exquisite taste, rather on the French style of grandeur, the frescoed ceilings being exceptional in their artistic designs and sericeous colourings.

Beautiful pictures, shoals of antiques, both in furniture, bronze, china, and glass, adorning the various compartments, set apart for entertaining purposes, with a delightful conservatory filled with graceful palms, and other rare plants, overlooking Park Lane and Hyde Park, granting a glorious view of this gem spot of town.

It's doubtful if any other private sanctum in Europe ever excelled Number One Seamore Place, during Mr. Alfred's reign, in sumptuous entertainments, being both a great lover and patron of music, as well as a critical connoisseur of the art, devoting a large amount of time within its atmosphere, a constant supporter of Grand Opera at Covent Garden, invariably to be seen nightly in his stage box during the season, enthusiastic in the development, encouraging talent wherever it showed promise, in fact bestowing endless beneficiaries and deeds of benevolence, to further the good cause, hence the world suffered a huge loss when this munificent donor passed over.

Making it a great point in his life to cultivate the personal acquaintance of most of the World's Greatest Stars, Mr. Alfred found himself in that enviable position to group his wonderful programmes to just suit the occasion in which he desired to specialize, with some of these unique

evenings, being little short of marvellous, when Patti and some of her compatriots sang, carrying away those most fortunate guests, certainly imagining themselves simply zodiaced.

It was certainly the ambition of most every entertainer, amongst the lesser fry, to gain entrée within the walls of this famous residence, but many such artists had contracted the absurd idea, that if ever their abilities were fortunate enough to attract Mr. Alfred's attention, with the possible chance arriving, they could easily ask most any fee, even at times an outrageous one, for if Mr. Alfred really required their services, he was sure to agree.

But fortunately, they didn't know their man, nothing being more distasteful to that gentleman than to think any artist came to perform at his home measured in so much coin, not that Mr. A. wasn't generous, but fortunately possessed a far more charming method, which he invariably adopted in dealing with such matters, that being to present the artist with a substantial fee, followed shortly afterwards, by sending some unique and valuable remembrance of the event.

Well remembering one instance, when Mr. Alfred requested his agent to endeavour to secure the services of a certain Music Hall Singer to appear at his home on a special Sunday night, the agent proving perfectly honest and open handed, in mentioning the matter to the performer, informing him it was the expressed desire of Mr. de Rothschild, with the artist instantly contracting swelled

cranium, doubling his usual fee at once, declaring nothing less.

The agent courteously endeavouring to explain that it would be far more valuable to his interests to become a shade more conciliatory by accepting his normal remuneration, assuring him at the same time he'd never regret what followed, but being such a chesty stupid ass, declined to bend an inch, remaining simply adamant, declaring if Mr. Alfred de Rothschild wanted his services, that's what he'd have to part.

Needless to say, that was the end of it. He never went, and understand there were others.

My fortunate opportunity happened during the winter of '89, Mr. Ashton informing me one day he'd arranged for me to go on a certain Sunday evening to help entertain a small after dinner party.

Arriving around the appointed time, was ushered into a small ante-room, having been there but a precious few minutes when Mr. Alfred floats in, purely to enquire after my comfort, mentioning in the most courteous and kindly manner, at being so pleased to again make acquaintance with my banjo, having heard my performances at one or two large receptions, where huge throngs were congregated, but under the present circumstances, thought possibly would prove far more satisfactory, there being only a handful of listeners.

Then noticing my comfort had been amply studied by his butler, who previously brought in refreshments and

some excellent cigars, left saying he'd come again shortly, soon as the time for music could be arranged.

The playing part was dead easy, the audience proving keenly interested, none more so than Mr. Alfred himself, who becoming so imbued with the Pizzicati from Delibes' "Sylvia," insisted upon my rendering it thrice.

It was well after midnight before everybody went in to supper, the table presenting a veritable picture, the artistic decorations displaying choicest flowers and delicious fruit, undoubtedly gathered from his country seat.

Mr. Alfred being most energetic in handing various delicacies amongst his guests, and noticing the butler about to place something in front of myself, remarked : "I'll attend to Mr. Cammeyer ! You look after the others !" that alone showing the nature, characteristic of this personality, so anxious to impress the key note of welcome to a stranger, he couldn't resist personal efforts.

Upon the conclusion of supper, most of the guests gradually departed, with Mr. Alfred mentioning, trusting I wasn't in a hurry, as he'd like a chat with me, we again strolling into the reception room, becoming seated, myself lighting a cigar, whilst here we conversed on various subjects, with his asking numerous questions regards my career in England, mentioning if ever I thought of giving any concerts in town, I was to be sure and send him a notice.

Enquiring if the cigar was to my liking, replied it was delightful, he immediately insisting upon putting the

remainder of them in my pocket, we next moving about the room, he showing me many rare bits of antiques, likewise running against still more cigars, compelling me to install also in my pockets, with the ultimate result that all my available space was choked with Havanas.

It becoming well past two, before bidding him good night, after profusely thanking him, for his kindly and generous attention, hence getting my traps together, the butler securing a hansom, then assisting me in, and upon closing the doors, topped up with a hundred Perfectos, with Mr. Alfred's compliments.

One couldn't be in Mr. Alfred's presence long, without being convinced of his sincerity, for his manner of conversing seemed so thoroughly infused with genuineness and certainly not destined to forget you the moment the door slams on your back.

My convictions at the time proving that, for the following Xmas, a further parcel of a hundred cigars, bearing a card with the donor's compliments arrived, also later on sending me an invitation to the Gaiety Ball, which believed the City House of Rothschild were in some way interested in, but unfortunately was prevented from accepting, being engaged down at Hindlip Hall for the very day.

Mr. Alfred was quite a clever pianist, for remember his manipulating the dominoes very charmingly one night at a private dinner party, at which the Prince of Wales was also a guest, his technique and musical conception indeed surprising me, also the same evening in a joking manner,

said he'd show me how to play the banjo, taking up my instrument, began strumming the novice's usual three chords, highly amusing Sir Arthur Sullivan, who remarked: He'd be pleased to show him a few more any time he liked.

It was several years later, during the South African War, when hearing Mr. de Rothschild would like a word with me, went round one morning to Seamore Place, finding him extremely courteous, also mentioning that a huge gala night, to take place at Covent Garden Opera House, was being organized, and that Patti, Alvarez, Johannes Wolff, Edward Lloyd, and the Opera Orchestra, were amongst the stars going to appear, and wondered if the Amateur Orchestra which I personally conducted would be kind enough also to assist.

Personally thanked Mr. Alfred for his kind suggestion, informing him that they certainly would be delighted to do their share, and that he could rely on my arranging such, receiving his assurance in return that their comfort would be carefully studied, which certainly wasn't necessary on his part to mention, knowing the gentleman as I did, at last coming away realizing this event was going to be Some Show, wondering how the idea ever entered his head to ask for my orchestra, only possibly accounting for it, through Lady Lansdowne herself, as her son Lord Charles Fitzmaurice was a client of mine, always attending the St. James' Hall Banjo Festivals, when the orchestra performed, his Lordship possibly suggesting same to his

mother, still with Mr. Alfred's power and ingenuity behind this big undertaking, the success of this show was assured.

It's doubtful if any other living person, at that period, could possibly have engineered such an outstanding affair, his personal touch alone, being the exclusive means of mustering such an exceptional array of talent, solely responsible in obtaining the consent of Adelina Patti, to even for once, break through her stringent rule, regards charitable performances, by agreeing to appear on this momentous occasion, also inducing Mons. Alvarez to come over from New York, specially to join forces with the World's Greatest, in rendering the grand scene from Gounod's *Romeo et Juliette*.

The moment the Press got hold of this scheme, it created intense excitement, for even at the exorbitant prices, with Boxes £250 and Stalls £15, there was a wild rush for tickets, even scrambling for any old place, resulting in the whole Opera House being completely sold out within very few days, Mr. Alfred very kindly sending myself two complimentary ones in the Gallery, which ultimately turned over to Lady Lansdowne, her Ladyship obtaining ten guineas for same, this incident presumably reaching Mr. Alfred's ear, for two days later, received one of the Upper Boxes with his compliments.

It was certainly a terrific night, and doubt if the old box of an Opera House will ever witness the like again, the receipts topping £11,000, the auditorium packed alive with England's aristocracy, the Prince and Princess of Wales,

with a large contingent of Royalty, occupying two large boxes on the Grand Tier.

Audiences attending this old fashioned Opera House, which is certainly no credit to such a noble town as London, haven't the least conception of the antiquated conditions existing at that period behind the curtain, proving a veritable puzzler to me, when first catching the glimpse, wondering how producers ever displayed such ingenuity in staging big productions, with such spectacular effect, under such limitations, for on this auspicious occasion, the stage space allotted for my orchestra being extremely cramped, they numbering eighty-eight, compelled to be in seated position, keeping dead silence, whilst Patti made her first appearance, with only a drop cloth separating.

Never in my life, upon taking the stage, having experienced such a blinding vision from the dazzling rays off the diamonds; talk about the night having a thousand eyes, not in it with the glare from these sparklers; in fact, after turning to conduct, imagined feeling their focusing rays, similar to a sun bath on one's back.

As anticipated, the Orchestra's comfort hadn't been forgotten, could bet all your bottom dollars on that, for directly beneath the stage a large spacious room had been temporarily constructed, with curtained doors, bearing the inscription, "Reserved for Mr. Cammeyer's Orchestra," with the interior arranged like a miniature restaurant, tables charmingly decorated, a large sideboard at the far end containing all sorts of cold viands, besides innumerable

delicacies, a staff of waiters, all ready to begin service the moment they hear the command, proving to my vision, such an unexpected surprise, that after seeing the members of my band comfortably seated, flew off, gathering in Edward Lloyd, Johannes Wolff, Lieut. Rogan, for there was such an abundance, felt it would be unmitigated sacrilege to leave such a feast, but within the right spot, for the champagne alone enticed keen inducement, well receiving serious attention.

This occasion being such an epochical one, fancied it might be of interest to some to peruse the programme, which will undoubtedly convey some little impression of the ingenuity of this thoughtful benefactor, so typical to his nature.

PROGRAMME

PART ONE

- | | | |
|------------------|--|---------------------|
| 1 Overture | "Guillaume Tell" | <i>Rossini</i> |
| 2 Prize Song | "Meistersinger of Nuremberg" | <i>Wagner</i> |
| | MR. EDWARD LLOYD | |
| 3 Solo Violin | Canzonetta and Finale (Allegro Molto) | <i>Godard</i> |
| | MONSIEUR JOHANNES WOLFF | |
| 4 Air des Bijoux | "Faust" | <i>Gounod</i> |
| | MADAM ADELINA PATTI | |
| 5 Selections | (a) Danse de la Fée Dragée }
(b) Valse des Fleurs } | <i>Tschaikowsky</i> |
| | From the "Casse-Noisette" | |

THE AMATEUR BANJO, MANDOLINE, AND GUITAR ORCHESTRA
Conducted by MR. ALFRED CAMMEYER

- 6 Aria Voi Che Sapete *Mozart*
 "Le Nozze di Figaro"
 MADAM ADELINA PATTI

INTERVAL

- 7 Overture "Masaniello" *Auber*
- 8 Song Lend me your aid ("La Reine de Saba") *Gounod*
 MR. EDWARD LLOYD
- 9 Selection "The Runaway Girl" *Caryll-Monckton*
 THE AMATEUR BANJO, MANDOLINE AND GUITAR ORCHESTRA
- 10 Solo Violin "Polonaise" *Vieuxtemps*
 MONSIEUR JOHANNES WOLFF
- 11 Grand Duet 4th Act "Romeo & Juliette" *Gounod*
 (In costume)
 MADAM ADELINA PATTI and MONSIEUR ALVAREZ
- 12 Overture "Tannhäuser" *Wagner*
- 13 The Imperial March *Sir Arthur Sullivan*
 THE MASSED BANDS OF THE HOUSEHOLD CAVALRY
 AND BRIGADE OF GUARDS
 Conducted by LIEUT. CHARLES GODFREY
 and
 Selection of English Patriotic Airs
 Conducted by MR. J. M. ROGAN
- 14 National Anthem God Save the Queen
 First Verse sung by MR. EDWARD LLOYD
 Second Verse sung by MADAM ADELINA PATTI
 ACCOMPANIED BY THE OPERA ORCHESTRA AND MASSED BANDS
 Conducted by HERR WILHELM GANZ

SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN



SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN

Copyright Elliott & Fry Ltd

CHAPTER XVIII

SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN

(A SULLIVAN EPISODE)

Was fulfilling an evening engagement for Captain Baron, at 25 Grosvenor Square, which is that large brick mansion on the west side of this extremely fashionable quarter, not many doors from Upper Brook Street.

On this occasion, the interior reminded one somewhat of the Chelsea Horticultural Show, so beautiful being the display of variegated flowers, plants and palms, clearly showing whosoever engineered the arranging possessed exquisite taste.

It was a large gathering of Mayfairian Society, including several of the Season's Debutantes, yet the rooms being so spacious, were never once overcrowded.

As usual there was a concert, rather more extensive than at many such functions, for Johannes Wolff, the eminent violinist, playing divinely, opened the ball, after a short interval, Margaret Hall sang with conspicuous charm, and if my memory serves me right, Mons. Hollman, the Belgian 'Cellist, followed, myself not being called upon

until late in the evening, when just upon finishing my second effort, noticed two gentlemen, standing directly in front of me, acutely watching the movements of my fingers.

Presently one remarked :

Whatever Instrument do you call that ?

A Banjo, Sir !

Why ! Thought a Banjo was simply ping a pong !

But you seem to extract all manner of harmonies !

It's actually called a Zither Banjo !

As the assembly seem to be going down to supper !

Would you mind coming to the adjoining room, just to let us hear more about it !

With pleasure !

There we all adjourned, with my improvising for them, ringing in all the quaint bits of harmonies I could think of.

It's certainly most interesting, and quite charming, and we both thank you very much !

They immediately handing out their respective cards, portraying the following :

Mr. Arthur Sullivan ! Signor Tosti !

Playing at the Hon. Mrs. Albert Brassey's in Berkeley Square, later on in the season, had just completed rendering a well known excerpt, when Arthur Sullivan, again coming forward, started virtually going for me, saying :

Whatever makes you play that piece, you've just finished ! It doesn't suit your banjo one little bit, besides it's worn threadbare by every violinist in the land !

Unfortunately, it's a specimen of the type my repertoire consists of, which, as you are aware, are purely transcriptions worked out from piano scores !

Fully appreciate all that ! But they don't all fit your instrument !

Possibly not, but kindly tell me where to find others that will ! Shall be ever grateful !

Why ! Write them yourself !

That's a thing I've never attempted ! And know nothing about !

Well ! You'd better get to work at once ! For anyone who can harmonize like yourself can certainly write !

Such advice from a master musician made a very deep impression, and the more thought given it, the greater appreciation I felt for his timely warning, realizing fully there were many weak spots in various solos that I relied on.

The following Spring, received a card one morning from Mrs. Ronalds, requesting me to call, and did !

Well, Mr. Cammeyer, when talking with Mr. Arthur Sullivan recently, your name being accidentally mentioned, he expressed a wish that he'd like to hear your banjo again, wondering if you'd care to come and play one evening, also asked me to mention same to you !

Becoming so suddenly elated, it was difficult to say "Yes" quick enough, for considered it no end of a plum compliment, asking Mrs. Ronalds if she didn't think he was joking, but assured me he was quite in earnest.

Kindly give Mr. Sullivan my compliments, telling him, any time and place will give me the greatest joy !

How about Thursday week, for he's got a small dinner party that evening, and feel certain he'd like you to play afterwards !

Splendid ! I'll be there, so kindly give me the address !

I'll write it down for you ! There won't be more than a dozen present, and you'll find you know most of them !

Sullivan had a delightful flat in Victoria Street, and there arrived on the eventful night, rather before the repast had finished, being shown into the Drawing Room, better still called Lounge, for it was cosiness to the last inch, with large roomy chairs, divans, and chesterfields to flop on, Persian rugs adorning the floor, in fact the whole contour of the room being artistic to a degree, looking as if some clever lady friend had had a finger in the pie.

Photos of many various celebrities dotted here and there, and in the far corner, stood the Baby Grand, the infant of his heart, where undoubtedly he'd sat for hours, toying with the keys, patiently awaiting for the right inspiration

to fleet through his mind, ultimately improvising and composing those charming songs and madrigals, that have made his name a household word throughout the land, establishing fame and prestige, that no other writer of English Comic Opera has anywhere near approached, his versatility being unique, and the popularity and craving by the public to hear, becoming greater and greater as years speed on.

Possibly it was a further twenty minutes, before Sullivan suddenly rushed into the room, greeting me most cordially, apologizing for being so long over dinner, mentioning how kind it was of me to come and play, making me feel distinctly embarrassed, considering having failed to discover where the barest trace of condescension on my part could possibly emanate from, leaving me wondering whatever the little game was, that he'd before long spring on me.

The guests, fewer in numbers than expected, for only the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough (*née* Hammersley), Lady Hilda Higgins, Countess of Essex, Mrs. Helen Jaffray, Mrs. Ronalds, and Lord Dunraven being present.

After everybody had more or less settled themselves down comfortably, Sullivan said :

Now, Cammeyer ! Play us something !

So immediately rendered two rather short items.

Ah ! You've taken my tip ! I see !

Quite correct, Mr. Sullivan ! And have a lot to thank you for, if you think they'll pass !

They're quite nice indeed, fitting your banjo far better than some of the things I've heard you render ! Go on and dig harder. You'll surely improve !

As his famous work, *The Gondoliers*, had only been produced a short while, felt inclined to next play the charming gavotte from same as a sort of surprise, but the moment on commencing, up he jumped, saying : "No, you don't !" instantly pushing my accompanist off the stool, playing the work through with me, to the great amusement of the listeners, who at once demanded a repetition.

The evening, so far as myself was personally concerned, was a joy, for being in the atmosphere of such a remarkable genius, better still in his own little snugery, where restraint was banished, and ceremony beheaded, listening to his wit and humour, almost making you feel he'd possibly mistaken his calling, was sheer delight, the touch of kindness bestowed on all, was indisputably both genuine and sincere.

The hands of time were creeping towards two before we all adjourned for supper, which certainly was an astonisher, making you thoroughly annoyed with yourself for having enacted the ass by having dined.

Sullivan certainly had some chef to put on the goods that were handed out at that table, and it's no wonder so many were always manœuvring to plant their trilbys under his mahogany, for the reputation of Sullivan's cuisine was proverbial, and a lucky dog me to have struck it.

All alluding to music was completely banished the moment we sat down, racing, sports, and society happenings alone, controlled all conversation, and what a relief to come across a host who can toss his shop one side, suddenly and so suavely, entering into other spheres, with such zest and perspicuity, kind of made one peg your already top-notch admiration of him even one or two holes higher.

Hearing the cuckoo chirp three, thought it about time to beat it, so tendering my good night respects, rose, starting to leave the room, when Sullivan said: "One minute, Cammeyer, before you go! I want a word with you! So come along to my study."

We've all enjoyed your Banjo immensely!

Very glad you have, Mr. Sullivan, and I hardly know how to express my thanks, for allowing me to come and play, it's exceptionally handsome of you!

Nothing of the kind, and I want you to oblige me by accepting this! (handing me an envelope).

Couldn't, Mr. Sullivan, accept anything, for the obligation rests entirely on my side!

Now it's only a cab fare, and I know fully well what such was, when I first came to London!

This, unfortunately, leading to rather an argument, but he wouldn't listen to my entreaties, for he rebuked with:

Now, Cammeyer ! You must ! Or I can never ask you again, and shall want you to come later on ! (at the same time pulling open my cover coat, pushing the envelope into my pocket).

Driving home, deep in thought, when suddenly the solution of his little game struck me. Yes ! I've got it ! Gets Mrs. Ronalds to put it so nicely, never appearing as a professional engagement, treating me all through as if I were doing him no end of a good turn, then gently springing the surprise at the finish ! Clever chap ! Arthur Sullivan !

Upon reaching home, curiosity led me to see what the cab fare was like ! Finding it a substantial crispy note !

A RIVER INCIDENT

CHAPTER XIX

A RIVER INCIDENT

INVITED to luncheon at Mrs. Helen Jaffray's in Sloane Street, was in conversation with my hostess, when Captain Williams, son of General Owen Williams, arrived.

Ah ! Cammeyer ! You're just the chap I want ! Intended hunting you up, only Mrs. Jaffray mentioned you'd be here to-day !

Well, Captain Williams ! Of what service, can I be ?

My Mother's got a week end party at the Temple, end of the month, with The Duchess of Teck (Princess Mary) staying, and Her Royal Highness has intimated as much to Mother, a desire to hear you play again, hence was commissioned to get hold of you, finding out if you were disengaged the last Sunday in the month, and could manage to come !

That's the 29th, isn't it ?

Quite correct !

Can so arrange, and only too delighted !

Splendid ! There's a good train from Paddington, just on six in the evening, come prepared to stay the night.

We'll put you up, there being no late trains back !
I'll send into Maidenhead Station to meet you, and
bring your pianist !

That's all quite clear ! I'll be with you, and kindly
thank your Mother on my behalf !

The following Sunday was playing at Mrs. Mackay's, the
wife of the California Silver King, when I gave full partic-
ulars to my accompanist, saying meet me under the clock
at Paddington, twenty to six sharp. I'll get tickets.

The Sunday for the Temple show was a scorching June
day, with the thermometer well up in the nineties, so
decided to dress at my digs, to avoid changing on arrival,
getting to the station about 5.30, booked two returns, a
porter shoving my belongings into the train, which
fortunately left from the main platform.

Waited patiently, walking to and fro, trying to spot my
pianist, with no luck, never getting a sign of him, compelled
at the last second to jump aboard, going off alone, presuming
some little hitch had happened, causing him to miss it,
expecting he'd come along on the next.

The Thames looked perfectly beautiful as the train
crossed at Taplow, the various tints on the rippling stream,
against the green lawns and gaily bedecked houseboats,
decorated in radiant colours, produced a picturesqueness,
near akin to fairyland.

Arriving at Maidenhead, found the brougham waiting,

so was quickly off on the five mile drive to the General's famous riverside home, considered to be the finest estate on the banks of this noble waterway.

It was a most interesting journey, for after entering the Park, the view across the pastured downs, with scores of thoroughbreds grazing, no doubt some of the nucleus of the noted Temple Stud, for not only was the General a well-known breeder of racing stock, but a keen runner as well, also a prominent member of the Jockey Club, making the drive distinctly one of charm, the large high standing trees, in the zenith of summer plumage, casting long pointed shadows over the extensive tracts of greenish swards.

Arriving at the house, was soon inside the large spacious hall, a servant attending to my case and kitbag, noticing a quantity of luggage collected close to the entrance door, concluded some of the guests were about departing, presently hearing a familiar voice, the Captain appearing on the scene, with :

Here you are, Cammeyer ! Glad you managed to get here all right !

Only one little trouble ! My accompanist missed the train !

Oh ! He'll probably catch the next, we are just sending in, for Baron Hirsch and Sir William Gordon Cumming are now just off, so I'll tell the coachman to keep his weather eye open, and wait till the next train comes in ! I've told the butler to serve your dinner in this small library, and the moment ours is over, I'll come along !

Couldn't fathom the mystery of my pianist missing, and it began making me nervy, for wanting to make this event specially successful, was relying implicitly on his assistance, still decided one must be patient, awaiting results, so quite enjoyed my repast, with the Captain true to his word, looking me up the moment he'd finished, asking me into that beautiful chintz room, where we enjoyed our cigars.

Presently the butler came in, saying there were no signs of anyone for the Temple at Maidenhead Station, so the Captain issued instructions for the dog cart to go in at once, there being a train due, just after nine, we both going on talking and smoking, when suddenly his Mother entered, the Captain at once explaining the delay regards my accompanist, but expecting he would shortly arrive, but Mrs. Williams turning towards myself, remarked :

Expect you can really play some little thing alone, for Princess Mary is quite anxious to hear you !

With pleasure, Mrs. Williams ! Whenever you so desire !

Where is your Banjo ?

A servant took my things upon arrival !

Mrs. Williams immediately rang, a servant entering, receiving instructions to fetch my case from the hall, only away a moment, returned saying : There was no case there ! Then go up to Mr. Cammeyer's room and bring it down ; again the servant once more returned, saying : There was nothing in the room !

Turning to the Captain, his Mother remarked :

This mess is undoubtedly due to that semi-intoxicated — servant, whom presumably has packed Mr. Cammeyer's things in with the Baron's and Sir William's when they were leaving ! You had better send at once to the station, and find out if they're laying about !

Up jumps the Captain, buzzing off to give further orders, for it seemed to be nothing but instructions since I landed in the house, with his mother quite perturbed, endeavouring to contemplate what move to make next, with myself beginning to realize the pickle my lot was quickly falling into, for with no Jo, and heaven knows whether I'd ever see it again, which, if lost, would put the lid completely on my game, no night attire, nor shaving gear, or clothes for the morning, a mighty pretty mix up.

Well, nothing can be done, Mr. Cammeyer, until they return ! I do so hope they're successful, for it does seem strange to first lose your pianist ! And now your Banjo !

Almost uncanny, Mrs. Williams ! Don't you think I'd better get back, before it's too late ?

Indeed, no ! You might be far worse off ! For we must hope for the best ! Besides, you'll be perfectly comfortable here !

The Captain returning, his Mother departed, joining her guests, hence we'd nothing to do but keep cheerful, continuing our smoking and converse, awaiting the final verdict.

One thing was a cert., being far past the time of the

possibility of ever viewing the pianist, so that was ticked off, but patiently waited for news of my outfit, which after three quarters of an hour, the butler broke the tape, saying : No trace could be found of anything, settling the show business once and for all.

The Captain turning towards me, said :

Do you play billiards ?

A bit ! Captain !

Would you like a game ? If so, come this way !

Strolling into the billiard room, quickly got fitted with a cue, started a hundred up, but hadn't got very far, when the Captain remarked :

Fancy you're too hot for me !

Possibly a bit better ! But have a proposition to suggest !

What's that ?

Why ! If any of the House Party might like to see some fancy shots and tricks on a billiard table, think I might possibly be able to entertain them !

Capital idea ! I'll ask them !

With the Captain pushing off at once, for contending if they liked the suggestion, with it proving sufficiently interesting, might make some amend for the disappointment created, feeling my presence akin to the wet blanket order, also an awkward predicament to be placed in, and if fortunate enough to make good, even in the smallest way,

might possibly atone, placing me more favourably for some future occasion.

Considering it was a Country Mansion, the billiard table was in excellent condition, no doubt recently tuned up, for the cloth was quite new and tightly stretched, plenty of life in the cushions, decently tipped cues, and a topping set of African ivory balls, so felt my chances with this fakir stunt favourable.

In comes the Captain, with numbers streaming behind, they all settling down on the large settees facing the table, giving me a touch of nervyitis, being my first offence attempting to exhibit what little skill possessed with the cue, yet had always been keen on the game since boyhood, frequently watching the Knights of the Green Cloth doing all sorts of conjuring tricks with the ivories, had quietly bagged a few, that simply looked marvellous to an onlooker, yet were dead easy when you knew the way to pull them off.

As nursery cannons were virtually unknown in England at that period, for English Pros. hadn't set to work to master them, not even John Roberts, in fact the only player I remember making a decent fist of them was Dick Richards, hence decided a sequence of these little close cannons should be the curtain raiser, so after fully explaining what they were, placed the balls in position against the cushioned rail, asking the Captain to count out loud, quietly ran the total up to fifty, no doubt the balls touched once or twice, still the audience were none the wiser.

Stunt Number One certainly went very well, with the

onlookers both mystified and delighted, being absolutely new to them, giving me plenty of confidence and assurance for the number twoser, when turning on the Masse, as well more or less uncommon to the English game in those days, causing many smiles and looks of amazement at the curious little curves the struck ball indulged in, highly amusing the galleryites, then went on to fancy tricks, being jolly lucky in not having to make more than a couple of attempts, before pulling off the desired result.

Also rang in several novelties with the pool basket and a top hat, making the balls jumping in and out, finally winding up the show by manipulating the ivories with my fingers, and one rather artful looking shot of sending the white up, on top of the wooden section of the rail, with a hot lot of bottom spin on, suddenly causing it to stop, and come running back, curving off onto the cloth, cannoning on the two others, came off first pop, exciting Lord Sandwich to such extent that he jumped off his seat, rushing up to the table, wanting it demonstrated again, but wriggled out by saying the strain on my fingers was too great, knowing well it was a 100 to 1 against connecting.

Thus the billiard show ended, and after receiving profuse thanks the audience departed, leaving the Captain and myself the longed-for opportunity to refresh ourselves with cooling drinks, for although had performed minus my coat, the room was so stifling, felt grilled to the bone.

It was a heart breaking dilemma, turning out the next morn, catching a glimpse of the disgruntled togs laying

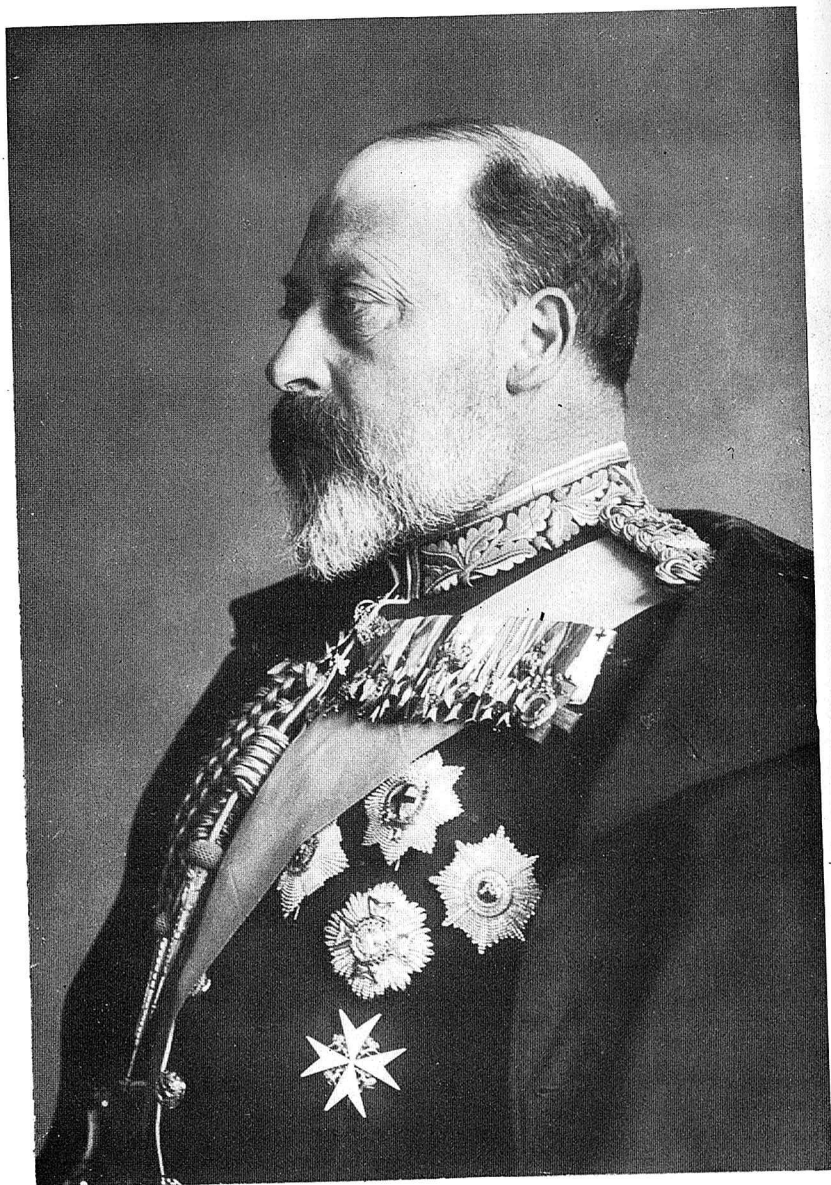
about, the tired shirt, wilted collar, and crumpled tie, yet all had to be affixed in the same old spot they'd relinquished only a few hours previous.

A mighty sorrowful looking ensemble I must have presented, when moving down that beautiful staircase, with the sun streaming through the stained glass windows, casting rainbow rays over my personal and leaking whiskers, the only remnant of consolation being early morn with no one about, my departure being scheduled before eight.

Breakfast was served on a tray, even the butler's condolence not assisting my appetite to relish it, for the surroundings of that exquisitely furnished room, in which it took place, were of such magnificence, that if ever a chap felt like a fish out of water, I was certainly the amphib.

But the toughest proposition had still to be faced, that was making my appearance on the platform at the Railway Station, endeavouring to conceal all that was possible with the scarf around my neck, coat collar turned up, quietly trying as the train came in, to slip into a first smoker, with the commuters not feeling over convivial, doing all they could to bar my entrance, undoubtedly sizing me up, with every good reason, as some belated drunk, who'd possibly slept it out in a hedge, luckily at last collaring a seat, hid behind the morning paper, till Paddington was reached, when made a quick dive for the lost property office, when immediately upon opening the door, spotted my props, staring me full in the face.

TEDDY—KING EDWARD VII



KING EDWARD VII when Prince of Wales

Copyright Elliott & Fry Ltd

CHAPTER XX

TEDDY

KING EDWARD VII (H.R.H. PRINCE OF WALES)

My second season in London was most enjoyable, for my letters of introduction to numerous society people that I'd presented had begun to bear fruit, for besides professional work coming my way, hospitality saturated with true open-heartedness befell my lot in unlimited extenso, giving me the opportunity of coming in contact with many notables and leaders of the social élite, such experience proving most valuable regards shaping the course that interested me most, that being private at-homes, after-dinner parties, and receptions.

High life amongst the upper classes, whether in London or New York, appertains to much similarity, beyond a few trivials, regards correct table etiquette, such as eating peas with a fork or spoon, also the destination of your serviette when finished, whether you fold, or cast *en bloc*, to a good home on the seat you've vacated, if ever in doubt, go slow, imitating your neighbour.

The prevailing question, repeatedly addressed me, was :

Have you ever played for the Prince ? and, when negatived invariably brought back : It's such a pity, for you should, as you certainly require notoriety !

How curious this all appeared, couldn't for the life of me explain, for almost every one seemed obsessed with this silly crazy idea ! Must play for the Prince ! Whether such remarks from the majority, was simply pure swank, trying to appear important, one felt inclined to summarize, for it seemed to myself most uncharitable to expect any H.R.H. to become a human target.

Must Play for the Prince ! Poor unfortunate mortal ! What a life !

Just as if a Prince should become chief adjudicator to every Tom, Dick and Harry of a Pro., wanting to climb to fame up the rungs of the Royal Ladder, and what a rotten ordeal for any H.R.H. to be saddled with ! Why ! If he daily sat courtlike, holding continuous auditions of screeching singers, scraping fiddlers, and plunking banjoists, no day would possess sufficient seconds to complete, let alone the long waiting list, lined up on the tarmac.

The whole idea of endeavouring to curry favour in such direction, to me seemed noxious, and deliberately setting out entirely bent on such a motive exceedingly bad form, for ninety-nine times out of the one and two o's, would result in a well deserved dire failure.

One has only to scan the dailies to realize what a Prince is continually up against.

Just quietly imagine ! A twenty-five thousand mile

Hand Shake ! With the Press boldly featuring in flaming type : Prince Charming !

Luckily we never hear what a Prince mutters !

Besides, it's doubtful if it was any better forty years ago than now, in fact possibly worse, for the continuous out-lined programmes, in the past, were mighty strenuous, frequently including long journeys to far away towns, opening Municipal Buildings, Institutions, and Parks, etc., combined with trying ordeals of civic receptions, being received at the Railway Station by the full beavered surplus of Officials, arrayed somewhat costumable fashion, who handed out Illuminated Addresses, and frequently gold caskets. Why bless yer ! There must have been sufficient gold bricks within the archives of Marlborough House to boom another Klondyke.

Early in the season, was engaged for a concert, organized by The Artists Rifles, held at their Drill Hall, Euston way.

A long string of performers, well known both in theatrical and musical circles, being likewise booked, the Hall artistically decorated with flags and bunting, presenting a commanding spectacle, the programme so extensive that no turn figured twice, it quietly whispered round, the Prince was coming !

Whether a bluff or not, never heard, only knowing it was a packed house, personally doing my bit, about half way through, and whether the Prince arrived or not, or if he did, duration of stay and departure, never heard anything further.

Again, the Honourable Artillery Company held a Super-Smoker at their Finsbury Headquarters, at which played, and lending a hand with the stage management, this being another of those bumper programmes, filled with the pick.

Likewise it was announced that the Prince was honouring the event with his presence, and believe he did, but as to his coming and going, heard nothing, only remembering staying a devilish long time amongst some of the cheeriest and best sportsmen, their hospitality seeming unlimited, the supper great, and the departure (well, never mind) in the wee hours of the morn.

At a very delightful house in Bolton Street, where the Sunday luncheons were exceedingly *recherché*, some of the most famous and interesting Bohemians of the hour used to congregate, the conversation and repartee, breezy to a degree, intermingled with the gayest atmosphere of witticism, the hostess possessing that unique gift of environment, whilst regards holding her own, never half of one per cent. down, no matter whatever the discussion.

It was on one of these occasions, when paying my respects upon arrival, Her Ladyship quietly remarked :

Would like a word with you, Mr. Cammeyer !
Before you go !

Later on, after luncheon, the opportunity arose, Lady
— saying :

Happened to meet Sir Edward Lawson at dinner, the other evening, and sang your praises to him, regards

playing the banjo, informed him he couldn't do better than secure your services the evening the Prince was honouring him with his presence at dinner ! Likewise gave him your private address !

That's exceedingly kind of you, Lady —, and assure you I deeply appreciate your interest !

Only a few days later, a message arrives from Bolton Street, requesting me to call, so hurriedly flew round, Her Ladyship immediately remarking :

Sir Edward informs me, your playing for the Prince would certainly be no novelty ! You're having done so on innumerable occasions ! So Herr — informed him !

Can clearly see through all that, Lady — ! Herr —, who is virtually only a walking agent, doesn't happen to have me enlisted under his tutelage, hence, naturally, it's to his interests, if possible, to discourage my services, for you know as well as I do, I've never performed before the Prince in private, and you are at liberty to mention such to your Baronet friend with my compliments, also kindly acquaint him with the fact that his German informant is undoubtedly mistaken !

About ten days later, received a letter from Sir Edward, requesting me to call the following Saturday morning at 42 Grosvenor Square, so going around about eleven, was ushered into this gentleman's presence, who after greeting me cordially, immediately opened up the same old

controversy, whether Herr —— was right or myself wrong, for if I'd already played for the Prince privately, my services wouldn't be required, my answer simply, was not wishing to argue the point, adding it would quickly facilitate matters if Herr —— could name a single instance where such transpired.

This attitude on my part somewhat convinced Sir Edward that my statements were more or less fact, for presently asked if I was free Sunday evening, three weeks, which upon consulting my diary, informed Sir Edward that date was open, he replying :

You'd better come ! Be here around ten !

Will never forget that most eventful Sunday, for arriving at my digs, after leaving a cheery river party at Taplow, the weather being so infernally hot, felt limply exhausted from the sun's long raying, indulging in a refreshing tub, decided on testing my Jo before donning evening kit, finding it in the pink of fettle, consequently started running over the strings, sort of absentmindedly, for my thoughts kept wandering back to the launch party.

Suddenly a bright little idea came fluttering into my mind, and remembering Sir Arthur Sullivan's tip, started working it up, eventually developing it into a new number, when presently upon my accompanist arriving, got to work with the piano, he very soon framing a neat setting, fitting it admirably, hence after rehearsing several times,

licked it into respectable shape, with my pianist jokingly saying : We'll try it on the dog to-night !

Arriving at Grosvenor Square, were escorted to a delightful little study, opening into the spacious drawing room at the far end, immediately taking observation, noticed numerous gentlemen lolling about, enjoying their weeds, midst conversations, one couldn't miss instantly recognizing the Prince, reclining on a roomy chesterfield, talking with Sir Henry Irving.

Naturally wasn't the least surprised to find His Royal Highness in person as anticipated, having seen so many excellent photographs, which must confess in my own humble estimation, never did him full credit, they naturally lacking the animation that appeared to enlighten his countenance, but who on earth can face a camera, with the same cheery expression as one would carry, when enjoying a tonic with an intimate pal, for it's gol darned difficult to look pretty and complacent with a johnnie poking your chin into various positions, dodging in and out from under a black cloth, with another joker shoving scenery and stage props about at your back.

The other artists assembled to entertain consisted of Ben Davies, Haydn Coffin, and the Meister Glee Singers, also noticed Herr — was the accompanist, which convinced me even more why he endeavoured to queer my pitch.

It was running well past ten, when the concert opened with Ben Davies singing divinely, Haydn Coffin following on in his own inimitable style, with presently the Meisters

gleeing in delightful concerted harmony, their voices blending with a purity of tone seldom heard from such combinations.

Shortly after, over comes the German Herr, strolling towards me, saying :

Vill you blease blay now, Mr. Karmeyer !

Taking my Jo, walked out into the large room, seating myself on a suitable chair beside the piano, giving me now a clear vision of the entire room, observing it was entirely a stag show, of not more than twenty, leading off played Arditi's "L'Ingenue," and upon requested to do another, rendered the Pizzicati from "Sylvia."

Just upon conclusion, Sir Edward Lawson came forward, mentioning the Prince desires a word with you ! Resting my Jo against the chair, followed Sir Edward to where the Prince was stationed, immediately being presented ; with a request to be seated, His Royal Highness at once remarked :

I've never heard a banjo of that type ! Is it something quite new ?

Quite, your Highness ! Only brought it from America, just over a year ago !

Noticed the second number you played was from the school of which I'm extremely fond !

You mean the French School !

Quite so ! Do you play others similar ?

Yes, your Highness ! One of Godard's, also several of Gounod's and Delibes' !

You don't by any chance happen to know Mazurka and Valse Lente, from "Coppelia?"

Yes, Your Highness! And should you so desire, will render it with pleasure, when next playing!

Just then the butler came forward, installing an icy refresher on the little table beside me, also handed me a huge cigar, similar to what the Prince himself was smoking, and whilst enjoying this repast, a most interesting conversation continued, finding the Prince clean up-to-date in the music mart, expressing several sound and concrete views, verging on the recent development, and artistic merits of the French in latter years, which fortunately fitted in luckily with my meagre smattering.

Noticing the concert was about to be resumed, paid my respects to the Prince, quietly moving away, and upon reaching the end where the artists were stationed, caught the sour envious grimace flouting over the German's face, almost green with envy, knowing he'd done his utmost to put it across me, but failed, also cognizant myself being alive to his little game, for was fully aware to the workings of this class of individual, who frequently preyed on artists, new both to London and the procedure, for once when comparing notes with an eminent contralto, after scoring a remarkable success in public, was approached by one of his like, to accept a fee of five guineas for a private entertainment, personally knowing for a cert. he received fifty guineas from the individual who gave the show.

The second half of the concert appeared to be as equally enjoyed, finishing up about twelve-thirty, when supper was served, the German Herr coming up to me, suggesting he and myself might possibly do a leetle beezeness together, but promptly told him off, realizing it would be a sorrowful outlook on my part once in his clutches.

Whilst strolling home, it suddenly reflected on me, what a relaxation such an evening must be to a subject of the Crown, after possibly going through endless ceremonies and trying ordeals, for the Prince that evening seemed pleased no end, being out of harness, casting aside all formalities, purely bent on enjoying the society of his intimates, entirely freed from all care, it being distinctly noticeable, both from his actions and countenance, with one thing pleasing me immensely, refraining from all converse, whilst the music was in action.

Early in January, 1892, a festive gathering of the Royal Party was scheduled to take place at Sandringham, celebrating during the time, the birthday of Prince Eddie (Duke of Clarence). On the night of that eventful day, an entertainment was to be given, the Prince of Wales requesting Mr. Ashton to secure the services of George Giddons, John LeHay, and myself, ultimately resulting in a merry little party, Mr. Ashton acting as chaperon, setting off from King's Cross, on board the Luncheoner.

Arriving at Dersingham, our destination, shortly after three, found closed carriages awaiting, the day being freezingly cold, the ground bathed in snow, feeling mighty

glad, when reaching that old English Posting House, The Feathers ! finding everything in readiness, to render all possible comfort, this old hostel proving most interesting, containing many delightful prints and pictures, relative to the Royal Estate, our spare time being largely occupied in viewing what we were shortly to perceive in reality.

Dinner being served about seven, the same consisting largely of game from the estate for our special edification, and just on nine we again entering closed vehicles, setting off for the Hall, which upon arrival our outer coverings being relegated by some of the household staff, then directly escorted into the Prince's private study, possessing another door, leading into the large hall, where the show was to happen.

This charming little sanctum of His Royal Highness's certainly made a most delightful green-room, being so conveniently suitable, with only to pop through the door, and you were on, hence desiring to get tuned with the piano beforehand, quietly opened the exit, finding the spacious hall in semi-darkness, with only the glimmer from one or two small lamps, and the glare from the large fireplace supplying what illumination there was.

Very soon as quietly as possible, got in accord with the Steinway, so remained quietly taking in the surroundings of this beautiful ancestral space, with its many old regimental battle flags hanging from semi-vertical poles, emblems of various descriptions, old armour, and exquisite antique furniture, certainly nothing more resplendent, nor

suitable could be desired, to hold such a conspicuous gathering.

It was well after ten before one of the Equerries came into the study, informing Mr. Ashton, the entertainment could proceed, so George Giddons was delegated to open the ball, his many ingenious and amusing yarns soon put the Royal gathering in the highest glee, it being sheer delight to note the genuine appreciation with which his efforts were received, then Jack LeHay followed on with his vent. act, his amusing male figure singing out its continual groushings over the Rotten Cotton Gloves, the Royal Party, simply convulsed with laughter, thoroughly enjoying his mimicry and jokes, like a parcel of kids, and can easily imagine what a relaxation it must be to derive such merriment, entirely on their ownsomes, without hundreds of eyes focusing their various movements and actions, virtually making a bull's-eye of the box occupied for optical appliances, so frequently happening at theatres and public places.

It's always distressing to myself to ever witness our Royalty, subjected to this over-dosed staring, the moment venturing away from home, and if you casually mention the fact, you invariably get answered :

Unfortunately it's the penalty of the job !

That's granted, we all know, still it might be mitigated and lightened, for it doesn't in the majority of cases emanate from the true spirit of loyalty, but purely sheer curiosity, especially remembering one occasion, when having

to wade through a mob of gapers, lined up opposite the home of the forthcoming bride, shortly to be betrothed to one of our Royal Princes, glaring with open mouths, caring not a solitary atom, regards the discomfort they might be causing this youthful feminine, for it's bad enough to continually face the usual army of tripodding snappers every time they leave their home, let alone backed up with a rude herd of inquisitive rubbernecks.

Would like to gamble, that if you stuffed an effigy of a Prince, white or black, within a Mayfairian Mansion, booming the rumour, you'd have a flock of old gals sitting outside all night, on campstools.

Just before my turn Mr. Ashton said : " Now, Cam ! None of your high flying stuff to-night, only something bright and lively, for it's requested the entire show being based on those lines ! " " Right O George ! "

Gliding through the door, viewing my audience, would sum up the gathering, not being much over twenty, with the Princess of Wales sitting in the front row, next to the Duchess of Teck, whilst next was the Duke of York, our present Sovereign ! beside his future sister-in-law, Princess Mary, little dreaming, that one day she would become his Queen, for Prince Eddie (Duke of Clarence), being slightly indisposed, was unable to join the gathering, to their great disappointment, only being able to listen from the gallery, at one side of the hall, where His Royal Highness sat clothed simply in his dressing gown, the Prince of Wales, Duke and Duchess of Fife, also numerous other members

of the Royal Family, gathered together in the rows of chairs behind.

It was quite the easiest audience imaginable to play to, inspiring one to turn on his best, everybody appearing appreciably happy and attentive, for with my act over, an interval was indulged in, enjoying refreshments and smokes.

The second part going even better, with my turn quickly coming round, again receiving the same caution, to cut out all classy things, which got countered with a nod, little knowing what was up my sleeve, determined upon, to try out, that being the Drinking Song and Intermezzo from *Cavalleria Rusticana*, for only a short time previously, this opera had stormed London, every one going dotty over the music, and happening to have been present at the second performance, spotted these items as likely suitable bits for my instrument, so buzzed off to Emile Ascherberg, the publisher, telling him the tale, at last inducing him to lend me a proof copy of the vocal score for a few days, which quickly served my purpose in framing out my requirements.

Giving my pianist the griffon, strolled out to our pitch, instantly getting away with the Rusticana Fantasia, completely surprising the audience, the music still being unpublished.

Fortunately my risky judgment didn't prove wrong, not receiving any condemnation for breaking my vow, in fact my action being agreeably endorsed, proving amongst the various items I rendered, certainly my *pièce de résistance*.

Immediately the show was over, the Teck boys flew into the room in the cheeriest of spirits, complimenting us all on it being such a ripping affair, and how much everybody enjoyed it, asking if we'd be kind enough to condescend giving a short performance in the servants' hall, to the Household staff, after supper, to which we unanimously agreed.

This message must have been sent mighty slickly to headquarters, for on going in to the repast, the attention paid us by our forthcoming listeners simply marvellous, bringing the choicest of delicacies around, and the most glorious vintage wines, tempting our palates, to the maxim.

The Steward of the Prince's Private Cellar, purloining me, insisting upon my having a peep into the sacred temple, so following my escort, was led into a medium-sized room, tiered with every conceivable type of bottle and brand, all pointing out, like so many big guns from a battleship's turret, several of the partly emptied bottles standing upright on the counter, was explained as truly wonderful, having been served in the evening's banquet, urging me to sample the elixir, which unfortunately did in one or two instances, getting tangled up with very old port, and choice liqueur brandy, having considerable trouble in sidestepping further château clarets, for with what I'd already bibbed, and the fumes of the place, was quietly sending me fuzzy.

The entire Household Staff sat eagerly waiting as we entered the Servants' Hall, greeting us with prolonged applause, their fidgety anxiousness for the show to start

being appreciably noticeable, but they hadn't long suspense, for both Giddons and LeHay soon got busy, tying them into knots with convulsive laughter, being just the opportunity these two clever versatiles revelled in, never missing a chance of personal quips and travesty, making it well after 2.30 before gathering our chattels, toddling home.

It being such a wonderful night, the ground carpeted white, glistening from the sharp frost, with a glorious moon casting all manner of spook shadows, that we decided to foot it to The Feathers, landing inside thoroughly happy, but mighty fatigued, so unanimously voted no postmortem, all scampering off to bed.

The next morn having been set apart to viewing the Royal Estate, Mr. Bryant, from the Controller's Office, being delegated to officiate as courier, turned up at the hostel, shortly after breakfast, to steer us through the many sights, we all shortly moving off making for the Royal Kennels, never forgetting the whining, barking, and excitement that suddenly reached our ears upon nearing the spot.

Those wonderful doggies, all standing up in their various kennels, bracing their paws against the railings, throwing out their tongues, endeavouring to lovingly lick your hand, deriving gentle pats in return, well knowing you were sending happiness throughout their frames, such eyes, by far intenser with expressions of affection than any human being could possibly enact, making it hard to tear oneself away, when moving-on time arrived.

Then across the timbered park, to view the beautiful old Church, so revered by the Royal Family, always attending to worship on all days of service within this edifice, when in residence at their Norfolk Home.

The quaint little old model village, with the pretty thatched roofed cottages, where live loyal hands, who toil upon the estate, the old Inn, where every resident of this hamlet is allowed to go and enjoy their glass of ale, clearly showing the kindly thoughts and administrative powers, both the Prince and Princess possessed, in endeavouring to brighten the lives, making happy those labouring with them.

Retracing our steps, found ourselves at the game larder, filled with pheasants, hares and rabbits, for shooting had been taking place for several days before our arrival, this cone-shaped structure with its spiral stairs, was delightfully interesting, and can easily imagine its keeper, having a mighty busy time, during the shooting season, despatching the innumerable hampers of game away to the numerous hospitals and benevolent institutions, for that's the destination of the majority of the kill.

Winding up our morning with a topping lunch, caught an early train back to town, full of enthusiasm for all that had been done for us, only regretting our visit, seemingly so short, still even then we weren't quite finished, for each received a hamper of game, with His Royal Highness's compliments, landing upon our hearths the following morn.

Although this Royal Birthday Festivity turned out a

happy episode for the entertaining party, it ultimately developed dreadfully sad for the Royal Family, for poor Prince Eddie's indisposition took a most unfavourable turn, pneumonia intervening, and during the early part of the following week, the Royal patient quietly passed away, throwing the Nation as well as the Royal Family into the deepest sorrow.

The evening following the Prince's initial appearance in the witness box, at the Law Courts, was playing for His Highness, and a few others, at the Amphytrian Club in Albemarle Street, the Prince certainly looking deeply worried and depressed, as he sat in the far corner of the small anteroom, apparently in deep meditation, refraining generally from most conversations.

Did all one could, popping on bright stuff, Mr. Alfred de Rothschild also rendering lively waltzes on the piano, even Sir Arthur Sullivan contributing, endeavouring to make the evening go, and rouse the Prince's spirits, but unfortunately all such concerted action proved of no avail, His Royal Highness appearing to be far too sad and distressed, his countenance alone clearly defining it, with a not-wanting-to-be-disturbed look, yet least wishing to interfere with the pleasures of others, but with the Prince out of it, the evening soon went fut, His Royal Highness leaving about 11.30, with the rest shortly following.

As the Prince passed out, one couldn't but feel both

pity and sorrow for him, realizing the unfortunate incident he'd been dragged into, certainly none of his making, having to give evidence over a dispute and serious rupture between two of his intimates was certainly a humiliating ordeal for a prospective monarch, yet one felt certain not a single one of his loyal subjects ever thought one atom the less of him for being drawn into such an unpleasant episode.

If England is always as lucky in securing such a fine specimen of a Prince of Wales as Teddy, the stronghold of the Monarchy will never be shaken, for Prince Edward of Wales was not only a true born diplomatist, but a great gentleman, and a sport.

AN IRISH PHANTASY

CHAPTER XXI

AN IRISH PHANTASY

STROLLING along Piccadilly one afternoon with Lord Churston, who incidentally mentioned the following :

Have you ever played in Dublin ?

No, Lord Churston !

Well ! Think it might be worth your while, especially during August, when crowds of society folk flock there for the Horse Show !

Rather a good tip ! I'll think it over !

Let me know if you decide on going, might possibly be of service to you !

Thanks awfully ! Will certainly bear it in mind !

Always had a sort of inkling to butt in on Pat and Piggywiggy, for our dear old cook, who hailed from the soil of blarney and ferment, often related during my nipper shuffle many fantastic tales about the land of the harped green flag, and realizing August in London was au revoir regards the show biz, led me to believe that possibly there was something in what his Lordship remarked.

Deciding to dig deeper into the proposition, consulted Mrs. Ronalds, who appeared favourable, promising, if undertaking the venture, would be pleased to give me letters to several of the right sort, who would certainly take up my interests a bit.

Upon again thinking it over, suddenly caught the fever to have a shot, and began making preparations, also writing Lord Churston to his seat in Devon, that the die was cast on Patsy.

Ran against his Lordship at the Club one evening during Ascot week, when he said :

Got your letter saying you were off, so mentioned the fact to Lord Zetland, the Lord Lieutenant, only this afternoon at the races, saying you were IT on the Banjo, to be sure and give you a show at the Vice Regal Lodge. Lord Zetland said he would be most pleased, telling me to request you to send in your Dublin address, soon as settled.

That's most generous of you, Lord Churston, and gratefully appreciate your interest.

London suddenly became alive with rumours, that the Duke of Clarence (Prince Eddie) was to be staying in the Vice Regal House Party during Horse Show Week, hence a festive Dublin Season was predicted, many other noted hostesses as well were reputed to be giving various entertainments during the same period, but whether any such functions would slip my way, was still mythical.

Climbing off the steamer at North Wall, was completely flabbergasted, not seeing any Patsys hanging on the curbs, dressed in green swallowtails, juggling shillelahs, with piggywiggies tugging on the tails, not even one with a spray of shamrock slipped in his cap, wondering what's gone wrong with all these immortal ornamentals, that's been picturing in my mind since youth-hood, but that's where most of us make the fatal blunder, building up imaginary local colour, and habits of inmates, in countries we've never even fumigated.

It's like the emigrant who's got it hot in his noddle the streets of New York are scattered with gold, and all he's to do is to get busy bending, raking up the yellow peril.

Naturally the whole universe is alive to the colossal shipments of specie landed in New York from time to time, but they haven't yet started sprinkling the sidewalks with it, in fact New York itself's on the rocks, and always will be, still had got it indeled in my vision The Pat of my Heart ! was somewhere about in the vicinity, fully determined to dig him out, before the final quit.

Rubbering around the Mayfair of Dublin on a sultry morn, soon contracted a dervishing thirst, augmented by the odoriferous ozone off the Liffey ! Slipping into a spirit(ual) abode, for the requisite panacea, finding the place empty, beyond the big hulk of a shirt-sleeved bartender, loitering behind the counter.

I'd like a Scotch, please ?

No Scotch here ! Only Johnnie Jameson !

Well ! Make it J.J., and you'd better join !

I've got yer for a stranger ! Where's do yees hail from ?
New York !

Did yer ever strike me bruther ! Pat Branagan there ?
He's one of Boss Kelly's right paws ! on the Broadway
Squad ! Keeps tellin' me to sell up and join 'im ! saying :
Can put me on the finest graft going !

The Irish ! Have certainly got the clinch on New
York. When I get back, will be on the look-out for your
brother Pete !

Not Pete ! It's Pat, I tell yers !

We'd better have a repeato Sport, and tell me if I'm
likely to find the real unadulterated Patsy around here !
None of yer snide fakes, but the true goods, in corduroys,
long socks, twirling a shillelah !

Nixy that brand 'bout here ! Better seek Donegal,
Galway, or Killarney, for sich specimens !

No Cook's Circular for the moment ! Sorry you can't
put me on Patsy, read yards about him, seen pictures,
and characters in plays, expecting the moment I set
foot on this Hibernian Float, Patsy and Piggywiggy
would greet me at the quay ! Must hop it now ! Won't
forget your brother Mike, when striking New York !

Mike be damned ! It's Pat !

Lord Zetland lived up to his Ascot promise, for within
two days of receiving my permanent address, wired,
requesting two Command Performances at the Vice Regal

Lodge, on Wednesday and Thursday nights of Show Week, highly bucking my spirits, then Michael Gunn, proprietor of the Gaiety Theatre, which one of my letters brought me in contact, quickly suggested a series of Recitals during the same period at the Rotunda, which was immediately booked, the town plastered with billing, with press propaganda started, ringing in the Vice Regal Commands, while Prince Eddie was there, which by now had passed secrecy, resulting by all this booming, soon doing the trick, putting the box office on the hop.

By roping in the local Banjo Club, a series of programmes was soon put to-gether, the only ointment fly being an accompanist, they being as scarce in this old berg as a Palestinic pork chop ; at last ferreting out an ex-music hall dominoist, who treaded the keys anvilishly, taking continuous rehearsing, to break down his *touch*, from disturbing the sleeping in Connemara.

The opening night saw a bumper house with a plentiful sprinkling of the élite, the show going satisfactorily, with no ovicular presentations, several blowing into the artists' room on their way out, mootng congratulations.

The Press the following morn, more or less complimentary, with an occasional waggism thrown in, wondering how the dossing snakes would swallow it, trusting there would be no uprising of spiteful fangs.

It was a glorious moonlit night, on the Wednesday, when the show was speeded up to get away early to fulfil the first Command.

Bundling the ivories tickler into a growler, was soon buzzing through Phoenix Park, which seemed at lamb's peace, adorned in the glow of Nature's shadows, mystifying one, however such dreadful political disturbances could ever have transpired within such tranquillity.

Upon arrival, the Honble. Oliver Lumley, A.D.C. to Lord Zetland, receiving me, expressing pleasure at my being able to come, in an extremely affable and charming manner, saying everything was in readiness, and the show could begin as soon as disposed, which was quickly arranged, for immediately strolled into the main reception room, finding a large assembly present, many no doubt besides the actual House Party, for the domains of the Lodge would never have stowed such a quantity of sleeps.

The Rooms spacious, attractive, and brilliantly illuminated, showing off to distinct advantage the beautifully gowned ladies, whose necks, arms, ears and hair were resplendent with sparklers.

The tall commanding figure of Prince Eddie was most noticeable, as he moved about, immaculately cuffed, appearing to be in festive spirits, his countenance suggesting such, by the animated smile, and just as my first effort was about to begin, moved forward with Lady Zetland's daughter, both taking seats on a roomy chesterfield adjoining the piano.

The rendering of a couple of items occupied some few minutes, and just on completion, the Prince suddenly

springs up, apparently in distress, exclaiming in softish tones :

My foot's asleep ! My foot's asleep !

Finding it quite impossible for the moment to stand with ease, with my immediately apologizing for taking so long, for if cognizant of His Royal Highness being in such an uncomfortable position, would certainly have curtailed the excerpt, which rather amused the Prince, who confessed it to be entirely his own fault.

With only having to perform twice afterwards, the work was decidedly easy, giving considerable time to answer various questions regards my Jo, and actually meeting a few who casually mentioned having heard me in London, winding up with a topping supper of grouse, no doubt sent over from Lord Zetland's moors in Yorkshire, the evening from my standpoint being most enjoyable, likewise the following, proceeding much on similar lines.

The Irish are certainly a great race, and when you meet the cream in their own country, they slip out the glad hand grip, virtually palming off their front door keys with conjuring cuteness, convincing you first pop, by the charm and sincerity of their manner, you're a welcome guy, and better at once get busy, joining in their fun, of which they sure make plenty, with luncheons, dinners, suppers, and a series of cocktail eras thrown in ; in fact, they've got hospitality whipped to a soufflé.

Coming in contact with one bunch, dotty on yachting, frequently slipped down to Kingston, embarking from the Yacht Club staith, in dingies, soon aboard the well-groomed lugger, which quickly passed through the harbour's mouth, capering out on the briny channel.

But the contentment on deck was surprisingly short lived, everyone of them soon sliding down the companion way, clustering round the cabin's table, with the steward planting severial Jameson's tonic quarts, with the usual aqua amplifier, in front of them, their eyes instantly gleaming, dials wreathed in smiles, signifying perfect peace.

It being all very well from their anatomical congeniality, but after giving a couple of goes a welcome, just to establish no harsh feelings, was reluctantly compelled to invent some paltry excuse, to escape on deck, for fear of becoming a creeping distillery, or a marathoning vat.

A harbour full of wonderful sportsmen was the Sheridan Club, St. Stephen's Green, often wondering if so named after the famous American General, who made the historical ride, for this hostel was the hottest canter I've ever struck, being fairly on the gallop from daybreak to daybreak, for here mustered the sporting scions of Ireland, in the cheeriest of moods, with a large contingent of English Army Officers, quartered in various parts of the Isle.

The luncheon hour found the dining rooms packed, mostly all devouring the customary chop and spuds, cooked to perfection, for the exorbitant price of sixpence,

including all the bread, butter and cheese one could shift, which being such a snip, many yellow boys flew into the till on palatable gargle.

The gambling was high, having witnessed the bank bought for a thousand of the best, and lost instantly on the next turn of the cards.

This club was a great place for entertaining notables, and vividly remember the supper given in honour of John Toole, the famous actor, the speeches full of wit and humour, with J. T.'s topping the bunch.

Now in the turmoil of all this gaiety, never completely relaxed my search for Patsy, for occasionally slipped away, capturing a cheery old jarvey to run me out on his jaunter, far across the hills, at last letting him into the secrecy of such pilgrimages, producing many a grimsical grin on his weather-lined chops, not unlikely sizing me up as a certified subject for Stowaway Castle.

Still away he buzzed, through the old country lanes, passing many squalid shanties, with abundance of piggy-wiggy knocking about, in some instances, a big fat ring-nosed sow wedged in the front door, with kiddies placidly patting its back, like Mr. Punch the welcome guest, fed similar to the star boarder, on the choicest tit-bits, reminding of the proverbial missionary, fraternizing with cannibals, gets eaten at the finish.

Made the acquaintance of a delightful Jesuit Priest, named Father Brennan, who hunted me out, after having attended one of the recitals, being anxious to secure my

services to give a short tune up at a Convent School, out Rathmines way, of which his sister was Lady Superior.

We both jumped one sunny morn on a jaunter, flying out of the town, through narrow winding lanes, turning at last past a well-kept lodge with massive gates, along a curving drive, pulling up in front of a very beautiful building, the door being immediately opened, with the Lady Superior receiving us, to whom was at once introduced, who after expressing a kindly welcome, informed her brother, lunch was quite ready.

Being escorted into a large room in utter darkness beyond four lighted candles, resting on a table, rather giving one the creeps as we both sauntered towards same, taking seats, the silence about the place, seemingly deadly, almost afraid to open up converse, with the Father at last saying : "What would you care to drink?" "Anything you like," hoping to hit it quick, my nerves on the hum, longing for a steadier.

Presently the door in the distance, feebly registering its opening, as a nun comes in, bearing a tray of something, the dimness preventing sizing up the cargo, placing a covered tureen before the Father, who at once gave orders for some vintage claret.

The entire aspect changed as we sipped this glorious beverage, the Father explaining the wonderful cellars contained within the building, which have accumulated through gift and bequest, and have no reason but to endorse his statement, finding it the biggest surprise in my life to

enjoy such delicious cooking, washing same down with Bacchus's de luxe, putting me quite in my best form, when playing in the large hall to well on a hundred young ladies and the staff, it being a most unique experience, the like of same never again coming my way.

With the Patsy mania at times still on the brain, meandered off one twilight eve, mooching along past the monotonous rows of bricks, striking the outskirts of the town, finding the surroundings far more realistic with neatish villas, suggesting Queen-Anneish in front, and Mary-Annish behind, never once spotting the likelihood of a semblance of Pat, when quite accidentally ran into a helmeted copper, opening up with :

Officer ! Listen ! I'm in trouble !

What the divil ! Bin doin' ?

Nothing ! Requiring me coat collar lugged off ! Or slipping hand cuffs ! But ! If you can elucidate the hidings of Patsy ! For the love of Mike ! Put me wise !

Which Patsy ? The wood's full of them !

Pat in swallowtails, corduroys, and long socks !
Tossing a shillelah !

Got yer ! The true Hibernian, with the sunny smile and short clay !

That's the joker ! Give the world if only to hear him say Begorra !

Never spotted sich on this beat, they've quit the kit !
All turned dudes !

Leaving me soliloquizing if his words weren't gospel after all, and that this derelict characteristic adornment of the Son of St. Patrick a picturesque of the past.

Michael Gunn and myself soon got busy again over a series of Promenade Concerts at the Ulster Hall, booking a well-known Regimental Band, one or two vocalists, besides my own turn, making the prices popular, with smoking allowed.

The idea clicked, with large audiences flocking in, but the accompanist proposition again troublesome, as my previous one had left the town, hence was recommended by a local music shop to give one of their hangers-on a chance, and did, with the result that on the last night, when doing my second turn, noticed some mighty queer harmonies emanating from the keyboard, as if the dispenser had got roaming amongst the cracks, when suddenly the whole thing ceased.

Cutting short my item, turned, finding the joker sprawled out on the floor, hence politely bowing, quickly made exit, sending a couple of firemen to carry off the subject, who was hopelessly blind, creating roars of laughter, loud cheers, and prolonged applause from the audience, the Press hammering me hard the next day for deserting a pal who had suddenly become faint, saying it was a bit of chilly sympathy on my part to a brother artist! Aren't they funny?

Suddenly falling a victim to typhoid, putting the lid on all professional work, leaving me after running its course

a total wreck physically, hence nothing left but skip back to London, soon as strength allowed.

Certainly disastrous to be knocked over at such a time, with lucrative engagements booked, but such was fate.

During my deliriums, frequently dreamed of actually meeting Patsy, only to awaken, wondering what's up, still determined to have one more go at unearthing the divil, before departing, so selecting a mild sunny day, skipped by train, far out into the wilds, getting off at a tiny hamlet, started rummaging all about the show, when suddenly smelt baccy of peculiar aroma !

Blowed if it's not Pat's ! Slinking round a tiny hovel, looking down a yard, spotted the Idol of my heart, shirt-sleeved, feeding piggywiggy.

Rushing through the gate, flying towards him, getting the wildest of glares in return !

Ah ! Pat ! I've discovered yer at last ! Bin looking all over the shop for yer likes, having read so much about yer in Ameriki ! Bin pining to find yer haunts, but now me heart is gladdened, for there yer stand, the perfect picture of the true Hibernian, with the sunny smile, and short clay ! Wonder if you'd speak a few kind words, only to hear the pure accent ?

Who ! In the Hell ! Are yees ? Begorra !

A GOOD TIP

CHAPTER XXII

A GOOD TIP

JUST upon finishing playing at Mr. Alfred de Rothschild's one Sunday evening, one of the guests, Mr. John Delacour, strolled casually towards me, immediately passing the following compliment :

You were in excellent form to-night, Cammeyer !

Very kind of you to mention same ! Also delighted to think you were pleased !

Do you ever touch the Gee-gees ?

Know nothing at all about them ! In fact, never heard the expression before ! So kindly pardon my ignorance ! Possibly you'll be kind enough to explain ?

It's the term used for Race Horses !

Am afraid I've never indulged !

Well, I'm told on inside authority that Goldseeker will most likely win the big event next Wednesday.

Which is that ?

The City and Suburban ! First Epsom Meeting !

Whose horse is it ?

Virtually the Bookies', and I've just got on for a tidy amount at tens !

Naturally thanked my informant for his kindly tip, realizing it was diplomatic to appear interested, especially from a member of the Turf Club; still, on the other hand knowing nothing of race meetings, having never attended one, even in my own country, although confess witnessing trotting matches at State Fairs, only tended to make me feel it was purely a passing conversational observation, which flew out of my mind the moment it had transpired.

The following day at the Pelican Club after luncheon, was playing billiards with Fred Leslie (of Gaiety Theatre fame), with a few onlookers sitting around, when presently one remarked :

Fred ! What's going to win the City and Sub. ?

Haven't the faintest notion !

Butting in myself with the information heard the night previous at Mr. Alfred's, which though listened to intensely, yet didn't seem to create an over hot impression, for the general outspoken trend of fancies pointed to the favourite being the most likely winner, personally all Greek to me, being absolutely ignorant of the gee-gee's name.

With that the discussion momentarily ceased, with Leslie bringing off a most outrageous fluke off the red, heralded with groans and cheers from the squatters.

Presently one of the onlookers remarked : " If you fancy Goldseeker, why don't you have a flutter with a couple of the best, yet feel you might just as well drop them down the drain," with my retorting : " Having never done such

a thing before ! Hadn't the faintest notion how to go about it ! ”

The Marker overhearing all this controversy, said in a quiet tone, as I came towards the spot end of the table :

Can easily fix that for you, Mr. Cammeyer ! With a reliable bookie close by ! Will run round if you like and get it on !

Well, here's the jimmies. Push off !

The Marker was only away a few minutes, before returning, saying :

Got them on for you ! Quid each way, ten to one !

Travelling down to Chichester the following Wednesday to play for Mr. Douglas Henty, any idea of having contracted a bet had entirely slipped my memory, the fever having so far infected me not an atom, possessing no knowledge of the sport, hence was naturally entirely disinterested, and never likely to be otherwise, consequently my thoughts were wandering in an entirely different sphere.

Just as the train was slowing down to a halt at Horsham Station, a porter came running along the platform ! Yelping at the top of his voice to the Guard :

Bill ! Goldseeker's won ! Goldseeker's won !

Quickly recovering my equilibrium, shoved my head out of the window ! Calling out !

What's that, Porter ?

Goldseeker's won the City and Sub. !

Immediately realizing that was my fancy, with two of the best on, remarked to my accompanist :

Struck lucky to-day !

How's that ?

Backed Goldseeker for the City and Sub. ! Had a quid each way ! Ten to one !

Must confess experiencing rather a pleasant sensation running through my system for the rest of the journey, which was only of short duration before reaching our destination, whence we found a conveyance awaiting, soon landing us at the home of the Hentys.

Douglas Henty himself, a delightful personage, extending a cordial reception, immediately enquired if by any chance I'd heard what won the big race to-day. Goldseeker, I understand ! So the railway porter at Horsham was calling out ! and fortunately I'm on it ! Good luck to you, replied our host, still it wasn't his fancy, for unfortunately he'd backed the favourite.

The evening passed off most successfully, playing, in fact, somewhat above my usual form, enhanced no doubt by the fact that on top of a lucrative engagement there were the Goldseeker winnings to augment the amount.

Goldseeker wasn't a favourite amongst the Pelican members one little bit, not that I personally ever discussed the question, in fact far from it, for beyond the billiard room incident, never once referred my views to a soul, and how the usual every-day habitats at the club got wind of it,

that the old banjo fakir was the only one out of the whole bunch who did back it, was always a licker to me.

Returning from Chichester the following morning, strolled into the Club around lunch time ! No sooner had my nose peeped through the door ! Then there came a shout ! You lucky Dog ! Backed Goldseeker ! Did yer ! Mine's a B. & S., ditto mine ! Same for me ! Make it four ! etc. Ultimately reducing the anticipated winnings by about sixteen bob.

After lunch, was asked to join a pal in a game of snooker, hence we strolled up to the billiard room, the Marker at once saying :

You've won, Mr. Cammeyer !

So it seems ! When do I touch ?

Next Monday ! If you're in about lunch time !
I'll have the money for you !

After lunch on the eventful Monday, again adjourned to the billiard room, with another member, to test cues over the green cloth, and noticing no one about, rang the bell, Toby, the waiter, answering.

We want the Marker !

He's not turned up to-day, Sir !

What !

Hasn't come in ! So far !

And never did ! And my two of the best, and the rest !

Went West !

A PHEASANT SHOOT

CHAPTER XXIII

A PHEASANT SHOOT

ONE can invariably forgive the ever cautious individual slipping his tooth polisher into some secret pocket when festivating amongst pals, whose proclivities at times run to practical joking, confessing myself guilty with provocation, when a wee bit dubious regards eventualities.

Having proceeded to Sunbury to fulfil an engagement amongst friends, dining and playing, travelled in evening kit, my return being scheduled by the last back.

It was a merry, jovial and amusing episode, with undoubtedly some secretive plot concocted, making the home train catching a misfit actually coming off, for when drawing their attention to the lateness of the hour, hoping to quickly slip away, they instantly began inventing paltry excuses, apologizing that in the excitement, had completely forgotten the time, practically landing me stranded on their good mercies, leaving no alternative but joining in the fray, enjoying myself, which went hopping along till almost daybreak.

Arriving Waterloo about 9.30 a.m., was just passing the

ticket barrier when suddenly heard a shout : " There's Old Cammy ! " A bunch of sportsmen rushing forth, tackling me :

Where off to ?

Going home ! Been out all night !

Not on your earthly ! You're going with us !

Imposs. ! I'm in evening kit !

That makes no bally diff. !

Grabbing my Jo case, locking my arms, calling out to the one booking the tickets, make it another, we've collared old Cam, sweeping me through the gate, goose-stepping me along the platform, eventually bustling my proboscis into a saloon smoker.

Putting up a kick was utterly useless, knowing the psychology of this little coterie, having frequently been in their company, playing at City Dinners and At Homes, fully realizing their determination, with invented excuses receiving scant recognition, conclusively convinced me the wisest course was joining in with both feet, with the not unlikely possibility of business cropping up later.

Upon taunting them to divulge their little game, and what they intended doing with the kidnap, informed me they were off to the shoot, rented near Godalming, would fit me out with a gun, also promising a top-hole lunch.

Expostulating back, endeavouring to explain it would look simply too ludicrous for words, strutting about in a

chimney potter, braided trousers, and patent boots, carrying a pop, trying to break through their over exuberance, trusting to instill and impress their jocular minds that it was no Dick Deadeye ! or William Tell Apple Splitter ! they were forcing such a dangerous weapon upon, nervous with fear, some terrible calamity of the accidental brand might be laid at my doormat, although never yet been foolish enough to scatter any joker's brains, but will own up to having blown the head off a frothy beer ; in fact, my knowledge of fire arms decidedly primitive, knowing nothing about powder and ball, beyond talcum and high-balls, or an occasional tango with uncle's three brassies. Yet had a bit of a rep with a snowball during nipperhood, also a faint recollection of range firing when in the 23rd of Brooklyn, laying on my little Mary, plugging away at a target with black centre, sort of every time you hit the nigger you'd get a cigar, but can't remember many coronas slipping my way.

It was laughter and banter the entire journey, ultimately arriving at a wayside station, when as the plus fours filed out, followed by my conspicuousness, all the ex-officios and loungers burst into grimsical grins, venting side line jokes and chippings, à propos of the comical featured object gliding towards the exit, wondering with amazement and curiosity, what the divil was up, certainly never before witnessing such an abortive spectacle, with my personal feelings anything but complacent, but more fully determined than ever on getting my own back later on.

Off we sped in an open brake, through the main street of the townlet, passing staring natives with open mouths, nonplussed and convulsed at the purloined Guy Fawkes sitting upright, undoubtedly wondering whether it was alive or stuffed, in fact if somebody had rouged my boko red, I'd made an excellent Music Hall Crazy Star's understudy.

The strain of these gazers mercifully easing upon clearing the village, trotting along the peaceful winding lanes, presently slipping through an open gateway, climbing a steepish hill, pulling up in front of an old farm structure with a mob of keepers and beaters standing about.

These exterminators of vermin apparently appeared dumfoundedly surprised at the contents of the brake, for as we all stood up, preparatory to climbing out, instantly perceived their optics focused on my shiny tile towering above the bunch, but as the exodus began, especially with my turn descending on to terra firma, an avalanche of hilarious laughter swept the entire lot, becoming so contagious, found all my pals as well rocking with the epidemic, the infection likewise attacking myself, still could it be otherwise expected with such a forlorn looking grotesque mooching about, so totally incongruous with rural surroundings, conveying the impression of an auto automaton.

Such titillation naturally developing into epigrammatical retorts being tossed amongst the beaters, a few reaching my lobular apparatus :

Bli'me ! Pinched a bally scarecrow !
Wait till it peels the bathrobe !
Brought a blinking Undertaker ! Case one's killed !
Are they Shooting That ! Or Longtails ?

Thanking my lucky stars mine were hidden. It's a cert. they were having the fun of their lives over me, with my clearly letting them see no one enjoyed the rag more than yours truly, but quietly abiding my time till the tide turned, to rubbing in a bit of my own.

After refreshing intercourse with the bootlegging hamper, guns were quickly slipped together, everything made ready, places arranged, off buzzing the beaters to round up the wood close by.

One conspirator actually having the gaul, tried forcing a double barrelled dickie despatcher into my paws, but nothing was doing, absolutely refusing to dally with such a commodity before lunch, besides had never yet seen a longtail winging it, hence wouldn't know the diff. from an owl, heron, or eagle, for it's a slight variation, eyeing a brace hanging on a hook outside a poulterer's, than watching them volplaning over tree tops.

At last we shoved away, the guns taking their respective stations, for within a very short while birds began whirring overhead, the knocking them over not at all dusty, the bag quickly totalling several brace before the signalled cease fire, repasting hour having arrived, all hoofing it back for luncheon in the old barn, everyone on the verge of starva-

tion, having developed ravishing appetites, well over-stopped by the clear frosty ozone.

The luncheon fully confirmed their promise, being a ripper, with everybody happy with enthusiasm. One of the kindly disposed keepers, noticing my discomfort gowned in an overcoat, said he would bring along an old jacket after dinner, and did, one of those greasy brown ribbed corduroys, hence the gambling on getting my corpulency into same was odds against.

Shedding my covering and evening tails, the ordeal started, taking considerable artful manœuvring to accomplish the squeezing-on process, fitting me like a chorus girl's tights, almost afraid to laugh or sneeze, fearing someone getting seriously hurt with a flying button.

Having no mirror to get a line on my new court presentation appearance, could only gather from the renewed outbursts of mirth that my latest get-up was rottener than ever, one wag suggesting only requiring a toothbrush mustache to make me another Charlie.

The third round began about three, myself this trip equipped with a blunderbuss, they shoving me in the lead as we tramped down a lane for the best part of a half mile, before the command rang out to turn right, entering an arable field, when as my picturesqueness swung through, emigration of crows instantly began in scrambling flight, voehying a loud hallelujah of caws.

My allotted position as a pheasant tickler, was down a nice dry little path along the outskirts of a wood, presum-

ably planted there out of harm's way, for upon pottering through this deserted trail, all sorts of strange notions kept fluttering through my noddle, one specially worrying. Whatever would happen if confronted with the local Sop ! Demanding my gun licence ! With only one for a mangy pup tucked away in my wallet ! But there ! No Beak would accept Fido Script as collateral !

It was absolutely the loneliest place I've ever waded, not a sound or sign of a thing moving, beyond an occasional bonnie scampering across in the distance, but not being out for rodential sport, purely bent on high-flyers, didn't let go for fear of disturbing some peaceful reposer, for the babes interesting me most would probably be perched in the upper stories.

My pals were certainly taking no risks from my pellets, for what gun firing that reached my sound box seemed a mighty long way off, which was somewhat consoling, but my luck apparently completely out, not a vestige of a feather having a flutter, absolutely convincing my presence was spotted, from far sharper visions than mine could ever attain, possibly laughing with contempt at such an incarnation creeping along, hoping to bag them solely for edible purposes.

Suddenly aloft ! Like a will of the wisp ! Came terrifying confusion, scaring me into convulsive shivers, similar to malarious ague, gripping my blunder with fear, looking skywards, spotted a silly old cock that had speculated chancing it my way.

With trembling fingers, almost but missing the trigger, blazed away, the recoil bouncing my topper into the bracken. But ah ! The Bird ! Nose-dived ! Sure ! As it fell ! Whether from shock or shot ! I couldn't tell !

If ever proud mortal stood bewildered, wondering what ever had happened, with peculiar nervy twitchy sensations, both hot and frigid, shooting through my system, just as if some medico quack had hypodermically inoculated my tenderest spot with instantaneous get-there elixir, a great feeling of pride quietly overcoming me, assuming dimensions, on realization that my first longtail bit the dust, at the expense of only one barrel, simply marvelarvellous, with nary a witness to verify my tale, when so informing the others.

Ploughing my way through the underbrush, towards the spot I'd haphazardly marked, hoping to retrieve my prey, found the poor old boy stretched out full length, resting on a mossy patch, minus a flicker of life, instantly bringing on a feeling of remorse, and worse, a cowardly deceiver, encroaching on their sacred reserves, disguised somewhat evangelistic, and actually acting the infidelistic.

Picking up the dear old thing, discovered its eyes blown out, rather convincing me my own hadn't lost their cunning, having always been told it's the vital spot to aim at.

Putting in action a well-filled pipe, started trekking back, with the buss over the right, the bag in the left, not having gone over-far, when spotting the bunch, clustered

together enjoying a livener, with all optics suddenly shifting onto my approachment, unable from the distance to discern what actually was gripped in my left, possibly wondering if I'd quietly been poaching some barn yard preserve, pinching a cockeolicky, but upon coming closer, reaching vocabulary distance, at last discovered the truth.

The Old Bean's ! Found it !

That's the Piker I plugged ! Spotted it carrying !
His way !

Keeping dead silence till their overture subsided, simply remarked :

Soft Needles ! Please !

Eventually divulging the truth, with nixy a believer, retorting such as an impossibility.

Shooting all over, light fading, trundled back, finding the brake awaiting, popping in all the chattels, including ourselves, quickly scuttled off to a quaint little Inn close by the station, here enjoying an excellent dinner, with my putting it across red hot, for daring to appear at such a feast, garbed like a lot of bounders, with myself the only respectable in the party, confessing my crumpled shirt front looked having done forty-eight hours hard in some spaghetti feeding dive.

After dinner they made me play for some considerable time, we not hitting little old London till well nigh

midnight, bidding them an affectionate good night, didn't take long reaching my digs in Piccadilly, with a brace of feathers in one hand, Jo case in tother, and a fat little cheque in my pocket.

OFF NIGHTS

CHAPTER XXIV

OFF NIGHTS

THE prevailing mentality amongst the majority of effervescing youths, frequently develops into an itching incentive to peep in on the night life of gay cities, the moment their boots start pounding the pavements, curiosity no doubt, many mildly call it ! Rot ! It's simply nature, strongly backed with adventure, temptation, and vigour, for no youngish sleuth continually wants to be gazing on surging crowds, architecture, monuments and shop windows, but purely by way of diversity, to focus his optics on the nocturnal community, who rarely venture beyond their shells, until old Mr. Sun has got well to roost by hours.

Besides, the mystery evolved instantly enkindles a symptom of indicant fascination, to butt into the gaiety at the very first opportunity, endeavouring to obtain a glimpse of the kaleidoscopic transformation, surrounding that moiety of night life.

Unquestionably Piccadilly Circus is the acknowledged hub of the universe, hence naturally most youthful invaders

want to spot it when the lights are low, anyhow I did, finding it exceedingly amusing, although it seems centuries ago since being there when Big Ben peals forth the midnight dozen, but during the early nineties it certainly was a cosmopolitan huddle.

The curtain rising on this modestic assembly, as the theatres and music halls start emptying, the early beds scampering off in hansoms, growlers, or bone-shakers, leaving a residue of frivolity, who evidently hadn't enough, so they wander off to supper haunts close by, to satisfy their gastronomic cravings, ninety per cent. never attempting to scan the bill of fare, invariably plumping on deviled kidneys, possibly hoping to install extra satanical sustenance into their follow-on revelry.

The favourite abodes in those days for such repasts being the Globe, Scotts, Cavour, St. James's (Jimmie's), and the Continental, they all laying within the radius of this percolating folly, hence the tables were packed with non-puritanics of both genders, forking away with speedless haste, for fear of losing the choicest morsel by the loud-mouthed chucker out, yelping : "Time ! Gentlemen ! Please !" For sharp to 12.30 was the lawful limit.

The exodus instantly beginning, the feasters pouring forth again into the open, loitering and moving at snail's pace, with Bobbies urging them along, but why such congestion ever became the vogue to congregate at Piccadilly, could never fathom, still there it was, a motley Rugby scrum, with only high-balls inside, pushing, elbowing, and forcing

their way through one dense mass of humanity, harbouring every conceivable type of dude, cocotte, scoundrel, vagabond and thief, proving a positive Klondyke for the light-fingered brigade.

Personally it got me unawares only once, but never again, although I've watched it from the offing, generally lasting a full half hour, before the police succeeded in getting clearance, the crowds most obstinate in giving ground, before dispersing in various directions, seeking further excitement, possibly many blowing into the night clubs, for even in those days several existed, and with other club members, frequently used to walk through Coventry Street, making for the Gardenia in Leicester Square, but whilst strolling along, one was inclined to imagine that all the Queens in the Pack were functioning somewhere in the vicinity, judging by the numbers of ladies in waiting sauntering about.

The two most classy resorts were the Gardenia, previously mentioned, and the Corinthian in York Street, St. James's, both having a large clientele, comprising the best bloods of the town, the feminine frequenters being nominally merrie widows, and theatrical back rows, the music most excellent, both having large string bands, good floors for dancing, and capital cuisines, hence once venturing inside, meeting such a cheery bunch of acquaintances, invariably resulted in becoming a mighty late rooster.

There were others of a more cosmopolitan compound, one called The Nell Gwynne, in Long Acre, presumed to

have been the reside of that famous historical beauty, another in Maiden Lane, the name quite slipped my memory, being the resort of pugilists, gamblers, and race-course gangs, proving an exceedingly rough hole, beside a dangerous abode to frequent, unfortunately for myself, being inveigled there quite by mistake, cutting it out in very quick time, upon finding a heated discussion brewing, resulting in empty bottles being used most impolitely, hence its life was brief, shortly after being raided and shut.

Only saw Evans's in its last stages, although understand when at its zenith was undoubtedly the most fashionable resort of its kind in town, the accommodation and amphitheatre with its spacious gallery and private boxes was certainly ideal for a night club, and never knew why the decadence set in, some hinting bad management, endeavouring to be too select, others mooting change of fashion, still it went fut, finally closing, but the shutters didn't remain up for long, as Johnnie Fleming, the boxing impresario, at the Old Pelican, having had a difference with Swears, the proprietor, decided to shift for himself, and well remember entering the club rather late one night, spotting Johnnie suppering at the far end of the room, who instantly beckoned me over, myself slipping into a seat beside him, when he quietly unfolded his plans, telling me he'd only this very night concluded arrangements having secured Evans's in King Street, which he intended opening as the National Sporting Club, which naturally

heartily congratulated him upon, wishing him the very best, when he turned, saying :

Thanks, my boy ! You're the absolutely first I've told!
And kindly reckon yourself the first bally member !

A well known night beacon along old Piccadilly was the Cab Shelter opposite the Turf Club, known as the Junior Turf. Although frequently noticing this rather conspicuous glare of illumination during nocturnal prowlings, had never once thought of exploring its innards, until one night, about 2 G.M., when coming along chatting with the Mate (Sir John Astley), he drew my attention suddenly by saying :

Have you ever sampled that crib over yonder ?

No, Sir John ! What's it like ?

The best bacon and eggs in town ! They tell me !

My curiosity certainly becoming aroused, from the Mate's remarks, hence when a component part of a bunch of starlight urchins, wending our way homeward one morn, about the hour the milkman gets busy with the pump, the entire convoy became suddenly seized with that sinking sensation, that instantly cuts out all hopes of a hunger strike, with the resolution put and carried, to try out the Junior Turf.

In Indian file we treaded its sandy foundation, meeting the astonished glare of several repasting cabbies, replenishing their exhausted frames, who appeared by the smiles on

their chops to be extending welcome to our sudden intrusion, for quickly finding seats behind the long bare board tables, we quickly sent out the S.O.S. for bacon and eggs for the lot.

London Cab Drivers in the Victorian era were distinctive characters in their own sphere, often proving quite an education in itself, to join in their conviviality, when their hands were busy on knives and forks, instead of ribbons, for they invariably displayed the signs of appreciation on their countenances when invited to join in coffees, the strongest intoxicant such shelters dispensed, breaking the ground almost instantly for general conversation, expressing their views on both topical and political situations with clear-cut alacrity, several proving by the flow and handling of words, to be persons of superior education, possibly driven to such vocation in life through the hardness of misfortune.

Every youngster about my own age was continually reading vivid accounts of the famous Prize Fights, frequently taking place in Old England, it being episodic of the period, around about the days of Sayers and Heenan, being considered one of the choicest bits of sport possible to indulge in, mentioning the notable array of aristocratic spectators, all secretly wending their way to some secluded spot, endeavouring to dodge the coppers, as such entertainments had to be most carefully planned, for the slightest leaking of information would probably mean quod for the instigators.

Often have I loitered in front of some shop window, gazing intensively on old prints, depicting such contests, spotting the two bruisers stripped to the waist, standing in their favourite fighting attitude, dukes clinched, muscles inflated to such abnormal dimensions, looking as if some pneumatic pump had been in action.

Surrounding these pugs, a large concourse of Dandies, arrayed in topers, virtually forming the ring.

Such pictures and press accounts naturally incite a kid no end, if he's got any sport embedded in his socks, and must confess, they played it up a bit with me, getting my curiosity rag out in proper style, with an over-keen longing to be amongst the bunch, feeling the chance of witnessing such a scrap, would be one of the grandest sights recordable. Still youth has many queer peculiar tastes, that simmer down, after slipping into long trousers.

In '88, when personally first struck this Merrie Isle, such encounters with the raw 'uns were almost a thing of the past, for Scotland Yard had been continually tightening the cordon to such an extent, that the risk of being pinched was hardly worth the gamble, besides the new rules of three minute rounds, instituted by the sporting Marquis of Queensberry, which at this period took firm root, soon worked miracles in changing the tastes of followers of fistic sport, putting boxing on a far more scientific and manly footing, and when carried on with limited number of rounds, was not transgressing the law, hence the old-fashioned battle with the knuckles gradually went west.

Personally must confess, from what I'd read about these old-time contests with the raw 'uns, had rather enkindled, purely out of curiosity, a feverish desire to witness one, merely to see what it was like, that is if the lucky chance happened to flit my way, but never for a moment obsessed with the craving for gore, finding myself dodging about hunting for it, yet used to enjoy the boxing nights at the Old Pelican, having donned the good fat mits, doing plenty of it during nipperhood.

Dropping into the Club one night after the theatre, ran against a couple of gentlemen I'd met previously at Alfred de Rothschild's, namely John Delacour and Sir William Gordon Cumming, who in a pianissimo tone, asked if I was in this rag to-night, but not knowing in the least what they were referring to, negatived, they then informing me it was an all-nighter, and if anxious to be in the swim, go speak to Swears, who alone can wangle it, which immediately did, being successful, but beyond that, hadn't the faintest notion what was on, simply concluding it must be something exceptionally exciting, or such a bunch wouldn't be wasting their time.

Presently more members kept on blowing in, likewise sticking to their covercoats, yet not a word was breathed nor hinted, portraying casual indifference, when gathered together in various clusters, enjoying some refresher, until in twos and threes they quietly began to filter out, with at last Aubrey Coventry coming by my side, whispered : "Follow me !"

We both gliding away, slipping into a hansom, with instructions to make for St. Thomas's Hospital, and as we scampered along, my companion quietly unfolded the plan of campaign, it being a fight to the finish between Alf Ball and Alf Mitchell, for the middleweight championship of England.

Hadn't the least notion why making for the hospital, bar concluding it would be a most appropriate place to pull it off, so handy if either of the bruisers got seriously damaged, but as the cab pulled up just over the bridge, my associate grabbed my arm, pulling me towards the embankment, skirting the river, which upon reaching, noticed other couples in the dim light, manœuvring about, never once stopping to exchange a word, apparently enacting total indifference to each other's presence.

Suddenly ! Without the slightest warning, a moving vessel loomed out of the darkness, silently heading for the small landing stage, close where these congregators were standing, showing not the slightest vestige of light, it was difficult to spot its breed, but proving to be a good-sized steam launch, as it bore against the jump aboard structure, a cove in officer's kit quickly mounting the embankment, whispered to the loiterers to be mighty smart, and clamber on deck fast as possible, taking barely a minute before thirty Pelicans were floating down the grand old river at a gondola pace, creating as little fussation as possible.

Truly a remarkable vista, when focusing one's optics on the ever changing sights, the panorama altering every

second, it seeming actually uncanny dodging under those huge bridges, alive on top with traffic of every description, even the Bobbies on duty, little dreaming they were letting the chance of their lifetime slip away beneath, for old Luna was just breaking her rays on the upper heavens, catching the Dome of St. Paul's, making it shine as if someone had given it a blue-belled gloss with a vengeance, as for the Tower, silhouetting into the sky-line, gave one gruesome shudderings, when recalling the many napper chopping episodes enacted within its walls.

We were a curious bunch of night-lifers, refrained through caution, from opening up conversations, satisfied behind our big cigars, enjoying the strange sights and shadows, for upon clearing the city part of Old London, the array of shipping becoming much thicker, passing many huge vessels at close quarters, never once piping the whistle or bell, no doubt many a starboard watch wondering who in hell we were.

Opposite Wapping, the silvery shimmering on the water's crest revealed in the offing, a raft holding a bunch, making for the middle stream, with our skipper's bell signalling the engineer to slacken down, for directly our course altered, glancing alongside this mysterious float, when instantly about ten culprits jumped aboard, proving to be the contestants and their seconds, whom immediately were stored below, our craft once more restoring its speed, with the restraint now removed regards conversations, for having more or less passed the zone of river police, the

likelihood of being spotted with suspicion was almost negligible.

We hadn't traversed but another few logs, when a joker adorned in butler's apron, appeared on deck, proclaiming: "Supper is ready ! Gentlemen, please !" We all filing down into a spacious fo'c'sle, where the repast was laid out, in rather rough but clean style, consisting of cold beef, pickles and beer, which we slid into with a vengeance, shortly being tapped a quid each for our gastronomic venture.

Dawn was just on the blink as we glided by Old Greenwich, the Arsenal and Hospital looming up in dimness, as if engrossed in somnolence, still on we forged, hugging the Kentish shore, comprising that long reach of flats and marshes, till suddenly steam was cut off, with anchor automatically weighed, also two roomy row boats, making for us from the shore, the pugs and their coterie being first despatched towards *terra firma*, the skiffs then returning to embark the lookers-on, but the moment we were ready a gentle voice again proclaimed: "Half Quid a piece ! Gentlemen, please ! To go ashore !" Making tap number two.

With every Pelican forking out a shiny one, our voyage shorewards started, taking only a matter of minutes, before shaking out our feathers on the river bank, with orders directly given, to move further down the belt of turf, hugging the shore, hence with daylight now fully established, promising a heavenly day, the reconnoitre began, shortly perceiving the ring, already pitched, the bruisers stripped

to the waist, seated in corners, with respective seconds clustered about.

Upon arrival at the ringside, another joker strolls into the middle, announcing what the contest is for, giving names of the scrappers, seconds, and then, losing no minutes, loudly proclaims : "Are you ready?" Yelping out : "Time!" in a beery guttural voice, the two pugs jumping up, skipping towards the centre, resorting to the ever glad shake.

Unfortunately will refrain from describing what followed, for after witnessing one of the most revolting spectacles imaginable, lasting well over an hour, not that one objected so much to the combatants pummelling each other, but the actions and deportment of the seconds, even more than disgusting, far beyond the limits one could imagine things termed human could possibly resort to, with every spectator seemingly relieved when the victor was announced, all of us trekking back in dead silence, fed to the brim, and will never forget Q.! The Marquis of Queensberry taking me by the arm, as we slowly mooched along, remarking : "What a horrible exhibition!" and with a shake of his head ! Mumbled : "Never again !"

Up came another touch, for a half jimmy each, before being allowed to board the steamer, the bunch presenting a sorrowful outlook as anchor was hoisted, scampering off homeward bound, everyone in the soft pedal mood, alone regretting the tedious journey, never once referring to what had transpired, glad to forget it, personally was chatting with Sir William, absolutely irrelevant to this

scrap, when a burly tough (who had unfortunately been included on sufferance), having threatened Johnny Fleming to spread the gaff to the police, came out of the cabin, moving towards me, saying : "What's yer goin' ter giv' the loser? You blinking Yank! If you don't stump up! I'll chuck yer in the——river," but Sir William with anger in his face, jumps up, shouting : "Any more of that, and you'll be first in!" With that the bully slinks off.

After a lot of parleying with the Skipper, he agreed to land us at Greenwich, but only consenting on the understanding of a further half quid each, still it was cheap at that, and the lot more than thankful as we hit the shore, working up into the town for a coffee shop to help restore our weary frames, being successful in copping a decent one, cleaning him completely out of buns, butter and milk, he never experiencing such an early sudden raid on the establishment before, and landing at the railway station about nine, gave the commuters a shock, when they spotted thirty of us in evening kit, with whiskerines well on the leak; still, hiding ourselves behind morning papers, eased somewhat our dissipated appearance, thoroughly elated when reaching Charing Cross, quickly dispersing in our various homeward directions.

Personally consider it a good thing for the authorities to have stamped out such exhibitions, for fail to see where the term Sport! comes in, nothing but a loathsome, degrading sight and far below what it's cracked up to be, and can only reiterate Q.'s remark : "Never again!"

That sporty Marquis of Queensberry was the very typical type of English Gentleman one so invariably gets described in stories of the seventeenth century, a person of diminutive build, dapper to a degree, with the usual fire-escape style of side whiskers, so much in vogue during the Victorian period.

Kindly eyes, that seemed to instantly size you up, the moment focusing your personal, a curving lip, that only moved but slightly, when addressing his remarks, with a soft, but abnormally high-pitched range of voice, for the Marquis was rather inclined to over quietness in his normal method of speaking, and must have often been requested to repeat his sentences, the recipient at first not fully grasping the entire meaning.

Personally made Q.'s acquaintance (as everybody called him), one evening after playing at the Pelican, he coming up with some complimentary remark regards my performance, which naturally broke the ice for further converse, mentioning how fond he was of music, playing the piano after a fashion, himself expressing towards the close of our confab a desire to have me come sometime to his home and play, when having a few guests in to tea, which ultimately eventuated later on at Buckingham Gate.

He would also cart me off other times, by calling at my digs, naturally pre-arranged, but never stated beforehand, the wind up, simply turning up at the appointed hour, then take my arm, leading me off to some of his friends' homes in the West End of town, saying we will be dining there, and you can entertain them afterwards.

These episodes happened quite frequently, and from his attitude in speaking of them afterwards, appeared to give him considerable pleasure.

At other times, his reticence was remarkable, and well remember our strolling home together, after a lengthy session in Wimpole Street, he as usual grasping my arm as we sauntered along, with my addressing one or two questions, that received no reply, hence twigged he desired silence, little knowing at the time that he was undergoing a terrible nervy strain over the Oscar Wilde incident in his life, for I could feel the variance of his hold on my arm, as if the clasp of his fingers were working with his agitated brain.

Later on he quietly informed me to a small degree, the severe strain he was passing through, and that was late one night, after we'd dined, and been to see Wyndham at the Criterion; naturally could only sympathize with him, but even that in my small way seemed somewhat to comfort him, so saw him home to Buckingham Gate, apparently leaving him in better humour, but afterwards lost sight of him for some little time, until one afternoon he rushed into my rooms, with his face smeared with blood, saying he had had a dust up with a member of his family, just outside in Piccadilly, so quickly showed him where to make himself tidy, he never mentioning another word afterwards regarding this incident.

He called on me several times with the new future Marchioness, and seemed to be exceedingly happy over his

forthcoming marriage, but then suddenly lost complete sight of him, never once seeing him again.

Many called him mighty eccentric, if so it was certainly eccentricity with a charm, for personally found him a most delightful acquaintance, and an exceedingly clever man, the latter has certainly been proved by the still used boxing methods that he founded.

ALFRED CELLIER

CHAPTER XXV

ALFRED CELLIER (Composer)

SLIPPING into the Club, rather late one night, after playing at Sir Cuthbert Quilter's in South Audley Street, noticed a friend sitting beside another gentleman, having supper, who greeted me with :

Hollo, Cam ! Where've you been to-night ?

Been playing at the Quilters' !

Did you give them anything special ?

Sprang a new one on them ! Graceful Dance from *Dorothy* !

Allow me to introduce you to the Composer ! Mr. Cellier ! Mr. Cammeyer !

It's quite delightful to meet you, Mr. Cellier ! Being such an ardent admirer of your music !

Very kind of you, Mr. Cammeyer, to mention my efforts ! Which I feel are rather diminutive !

Ah ! All you clever musicians are far too modest, and never seem to realize the merit in your works ! Presume if you said to Arthur Sullivan, that the *Gondoliers* was simply choked with charming melodies, his

answer would be that he failed to recognize a decent tune in it !

You may not know it, Cellier, but Mr. Cammeyer plays a new type of Banjo, and gets away with it all right !

How interesting !

You haven't the old box handy, by any chance ! Have you, Cam ?

Yes ! It's in the hall !

Oh ! Do get it and play the Graceful Dance ! With the composer !

Yes ! Come on, and I'll play it with you !

Fetching the Jo, we adjourned to the piano at the far end of the room, presently starting, and I'll never forget the accompaniment Alfred Cellier put against me, totally different to the printed score, for with all the orchestration stored in his mind, he introduced both novel string and wood-wind effects, whilst sitting round us were those cheery sportsmen, Hughie Drummond, Marquis of Queensberry, George Edwardes and Cecil Raleigh, as enthusiastic listeners, who insisted on more than one repeat.

This meeting with Alfred Cellier was certainly a most singular and unexpected coincidence, for it was only ten days previous, when at Chappell's the Publishers, that their representative suggested the Graceful Dance as a likely number suitable for my instrument, at the same time handing me a copy of the music, for me to carefully

look into, which I did, and quickly worked out the setting, and to think that within an hour almost of playing it for the very first time, should make the acquaintance of the composer, and also experience the charm of having him accompany me as well, seems almost somewhat uncanny.

But that wasn't all, for leaving the music part one side, it was the personality of the man himself that captivated me most.

From the moment of bidding him good night, he never once left my mind, for after retiring laid a long time awake thinking of him, endeavouring to picture and compare with others of outstanding character, that had befallen my lot to come in contact with, for there was something underlying his demeanour that drew you closely to him, his manner appearing so soft, sincere, and sympathetic, yet never once revealing the tiniest suspicion of being unnatural, which solidly convinced me that the summary I was enfolding in my mind was never once superficial.

This unaccountable meeting turned out to be the commencement of a fast friendship, for we often used to meet afternoons as well as evenings at the Club, and sit and chat for hours, when he would often relate many little coincidences that prompted him to write certain songs, and I simply wondered how he ever mustered up sufficient strength to enact all this strenuous work, when it was plainly visible to every one's eyes that he was a victim to that dreaded of all troubles : Tubercular !

As he entered the Club one afternoon, sitting beside me,

I remarked that I'd missed him for some little time. "Ah!" He replied: "I've been through a devilish stiff job! For on Thursday of last week, got a wire from Sullivan! Saying: 'Very ill! Come at once to stay! Urgent!'"

So packed my kit and took the first train possible to Weybridge, found the poor chap in a dilemma, for the *Gondoliers* was scheduled for the first performance at the Savoy on the Saturday night, and no Overture written yet to the Opera.

Sullivan said: "For heaven's sake, Alfred! Help me out of this terrible muddle! For I'm too ill to carry on!"

I pacified him all I possibly could, and told him not to worry, for the Overture would be completed in time, this undoubtedly soothed him considerable, so got the score and set to work framing and linking the most important themes and melodies together and after getting them into comprehensible shape, went to his bedside for approval.

He took the manuscript and read same carefully through and expressed delight with the whole construction, so there was nothing to do now but to set about and score it, which took me well into Friday afternoon, and as there was never a dog's chance of getting the orchestral parts copied out in town, for my brother Frank who's conducting at the Savoy, sat up the whole night and finished them about 5 a.m., sent them off by messenger, and Frank got them in time for the 11 o'clock final rehearsal, which certainly saved the situation.

So you can imagine I was fairly well pumped when

Sunday came, hence stayed down, keeping Sullivan company, with Frank running down on that day telling us all about the huge success.

Cellier wrote many other successes besides *Dorothy* ! Amongst same might be mentioned *Doris* ! and *The Mountebanks* ! Which were produced at the Lyric, when that theatre was first built, and the management were most fortunate in allotting the tenor rôle to Ben Davies, who immediately jumped into fame by the exquisite artistry he displayed in rendering the many charming songs written for that part, one in special worth recalling from *Doris* : "I set such store in thee !"

Another famous number from the pen of this genius, "Queen of my Heart to-night !" although interpolated into *Dorothy*, was never intentionally written for that opera, in fact quite apart from any such work, being purely a lyric that the composer fell across by chance, but owing to the popularity it attained by being so beautifully sung by Haydn Coffin, it naturally leapt into most every one's mind, being so irresistible that those musically inclined had this haunting melody with them from morn till night.

Unfortunately in those days, owing to the laxity of the law controlling musical works, any tune that suddenly swung into fame was instantly pirated and burlesqued with often deplorable lyrics of inferior origin, one version that was featured largely at the time being Dan Leno (at the Empire) dressed as a navvy's old dutch, singing in a strain of not being quite OK with her old man at home, suddenly

displays a brick from beneath her shawl, as she bellows forth the close of the refrain "I'll give him Beans ; To-night !"

Almost following the run of these successful operas, Cellier's health began to show signs of breaking up very fast, it being especially noticeable when joining his brother Frank and himself in a visit to Ostend and Brussels during the summer months, and it was during the following winter that the climax came, compelling him to take to his bed for the last time, the end being indeed a sad one, especially for the many friends who so loved such a kindly personality.

Cellier possessed an amazing font of individual melody, and had he been as fortunate in finding another Gilbert to collaborate with him, it's just on the cards that his fame to-day would have been on a par with that of his devoted friend Sir Arthur !

FOXY TRICKS

CHAPTER XXVI

FOXY TRICKS

It's not always those blessed with barrel wads of dollars that are generosity personified, in bestowing beneficence on mankind in general ; in fact, frequently some derive delightment in squeezing down by artifice many hard lucked strugglers, setting about it in artful dodger ways, with one rubbing against such kink, in all branches of riches, London Society Dames in some instances possessing this yellow streak.

Was lunching with Lady Hilda Higgins one day, Her Ladyship mentioning that Mrs. — was anxious to see me, expressing a desire if I could go round and have tea, which being close at hand, agreed to, eventually arriving at a most luxurious mansion in Palace Gate, at once ushered by a blue-belled liveried footman into the lady's presence, who greeted my arrival very affably, by proclaiming :

Ah ! Mr. Cammeyer ! I'm quite charmed to meet you, having heard you so often at Mrs. Ronalds', and as Lady Hilda mentioned you were lunching with her,

thought it would be so nice to have you come round, for my daughter, who'll be home directly, is intensely interested in the banjo, and so anxious to meet you !

It's very kind of you, Mrs. —. Lady Hilda did kindly convey your message, as you perceive !

It was sure one of the most beautiful homes ever focused under my vision, tea being ultimately served amongst only a few, with the usual trend of converse running entirely on society happenings, boring me completely to distraction, with an uncomfortable feeling there was something more behind the game, my presence purely one of sufferance for some ulterior motive.

The daughter presently turning up, with my being introduced, getting quizzed for all it was worth about the Jo.

After tea, my hostess suggesting my liking to view her home, to which acquiesced, we strolling about the various reception rooms, when suddenly she said :

It has just occurred to me, my daughter being so fond of the banjo, you might just come in one afternoon, quite informal, you know, and play a few things ! We should all love it.

Should be delighted ! When suiting your convenience !

How about Thursday fortnight, if you're disengaged ! As I've invited just a few friends to tea !

Can manage that ! Mrs. — !

About what would be your fee ?

My fee would be —— !

Oh ! But that seems an awful lot, just to play for so small a gathering ! Couldn't you possibly reduce it, considering the occasion ?

Regret it's impossible ! I'm under agreement with Agents, never to accept less !

Wouldn't hesitate a moment, if I was giving a big reception in paying what you ask, but being such a tiny sociable, was hoping you could meet me !

Very sorry, Mrs. —— ! Unfortunately it's beyond my powers !

With that the conversation changed, also her attitude, becoming far more frigid, so concluded it best to beat it quickly as possible, making some paltry excuse, suggesting my departure, and upon bidding her good afternoon, thanking for the kindness and hospitality, she immediately said :

Well, Mr. Cammeyer ! Think you'd better come after all, Thursday fortnight ! Kindly be here about three-thirty !

Thanks, Mrs. —— ! and skedaddled.

Upon approaching on the eventful day, noticed a large awning, extending away down to the curb, with scores of

swagger carriages rolling up, emptying smartly dressed occupants.

So this is the tiny informal ! Is it !

Going in, found a huge crowd of several hundred, with the ballroom packed with guests, occupying rows of chairs, concert hall fashion, facing a stage for artists, there being other performers present, including an eminent violinist, 'cellist, and contralto, who all appeared rather on the pessimistic side, setting me wondering if the Grand Dame had got home with the informal stunt, putting it well across these poor devils, knowing well with all her cunning connivance she hadn't landed me.

The post one morning brought an epistle from an address in the Strand, requesting my terms for At Homes, etc., as business might possibly accrue.

Wasn't doing any pen work, so strolled down just to get a line on the game, finding the number, mounted three flights, before observing a glass-panelled door bearing the joker's name.

Tapping lightly, brought a shout : "Come in !"

Entering, discovered a dingy little room with a long-haired pussyfoot-looking guy, sitting behind a table ; tossing the letter in front of him, awaited the opening burst, which he immediately sprung :

So you're the Mr. Cammeyer !

Guess ! That's correct !

Well ! I'd like your terms !

My terms are such !

That's your fashionable fee, but presume it's elastic, for my clients are not prepared to pay excessive prices !

I've nothing better to offer !

Surely you have ! For what you state may be all very well for Mayfair, but far too high for other districts, besides I'm in the position to offer you a firm date, if you'll be reasonable !

What's the date, and address ?

That's my concern, until I know your absolute lowest !

Well ! There's nothing doing ! Good-day !

Shortly after, received a letter from a society acquaintance, who'd previously secured me considerable work, which read as follows :

If you happen to be free, the last evening of the month, and disposed to accept the reduced fee of —, a friend is giving a small function, and desires you to play. Hate asking such a concession, but knowing it's the off season, with little private work about, thought possibly you would prefer to fill in your time, best you could.

If the same be agreeable, just write me accepting, and I'll send you full particulars, the moment I return from Paris, as I'm just off !

Feeling this was perfectly genuine, and it being February, when private work was scant, replied confirming the date, accepting as suggested.

Many days flew by, the expected particulars never arriving, till one morning, realizing the show was only two days off, slipped down in a hansom, just luckily catching the damsel, before stepping into her brougham.

Good afternoon, Mrs. — ! I've hurried down to know the address for Sunday Night, not having heard from you !

How stupid of me ! Why ! It's Mrs. — ! Buckingham Gate !

Mrs. — ! Buckingham Gate ! Why she's a millionairess ! Surely she doesn't expect my services ! At a reduced fee !

You must remember, it's the off season, and hostesses don't seem inclined to be so liberal, but promise you I'll mention the matter, suggesting you having your usual remuneration, so possibly it will be all right !

Playing the date, found it a sumptuous gathering, with several big foreign potentates present, also a sprinkling of Dukes, etc., the supper superb, and at the close, the Giver, who seemed highly delighted, booked me for the following Sunday as well.

Three weeks had lapsed, since playing the second date, with never hearing a word nor signs of any fee, mystifying

me no end, all sorts of silly notions running through my head, wondering which was the best thing to do to get a move on.

One afternoon whilst standing in Mitchell's Royal Library, contemplating whether I'd send a reminder, suddenly spotted the pussy guy crossing the road, certainly heading for this spot, quickly opening the door, glided up to the counter saying :

Will you kindly hand this to Mr. Cammeyer ! When he comes in !

"He's here now," said the clerk, "standing by the window, so you can deliver it personally !"

With that the guy moves towards me, mentioning my name, which upon confirming, hands me an envelope, quickly beating it out.

What the devil can this be, I wondered, for that joker from the Strand to plant a sealed note in my paws? Whoever could wish to communicate through such a channel?

Quickly opening, stood almost in stupefaction, when seeing Buckingham Gate, with Mrs.—'s compliments and thanks, with a cheque enclosed 25 per cent. down on my usual.

They certainly landed me a beauty ! That trip !

THE HONBLE. R—

CHAPTER XXVII

THE HONBLE. R——

It was during the autumn of '89, at the close of a Sunday Night Smoker at the Pelican Club, in which my banjo contributed, that a rather tall commanding-looking gentleman strolled over to where I was sitting, and began passing complimentary remarks regards my instrument, commenting specially on the character of sound, being so totally different to any other banjo he'd ever heard, with naturally my thanking him.

We drifted into general conversation with the most natural consequence of a mutual beverage happening, finding my unknown friend most affable and certainly entertaining, our confab drifting on for considerable time, until presently he remarked: "Are you disengaged next Sunday Night?" Looking at my diary, finding the date open, informed him that, so far, I was free! "Well! You come with me to dine with some friends, and bring your banjo, for they are very keen on music, and most charming people!"

Naturally replied that I should be delighted, hence he said: "Book the date! Meet me here at 7.30!"

He then handed me his card denoting the address of a well-known Club in St. James's, and after a few minutes of further converse, he rose to go, again reminding me not to forget the arrangement as he would be looking forward to same with intense pleasure, before bidding me good-night.

After his departure, sat soliloquizing for a short period, endeavouring to sum the situation up, for although he possessed every culture that one might expect from such a personage, he still left the impression that there was a streak of eccentricism flowing through his system, although possibly not of a very marked nature, and if fortunate enough to run up against him on several occasions, would soon reveal the correct diagnosis.

Coming into the Club the following Sunday prompt to time, hadn't long to wait, for my new acquaintance soon arrived, and after having cocktailed together, we jumped into a hansom with instructions to Grosvenor Street, arriving within a few minutes the distance being so minute, before pushing the bell of our destined abode, finding a hearty welcome from the host, the party consisting of only the gentleman, his wife and sister-in-law, the dinner was simple, yet excellent, and afterwards adjourned to the drawing room with my playing for some considerable time.

It was past midnight before we left, both strolling down to Piccadilly together, parting at Bond Street corner, receiving his profuse thanks and trusting to again seeing me

when again up in town later on, thus the curtain dropped, leaving me to walk on to my digs certainly rather mystified, and deep in thought, with conclusively only one resolve, that being a weird evening.

Fully six months lapsed before setting eyes on him again, for he previously informed me that he only came to town about twice a year, yet he never once intimated where he hailed from, and naturally never enquired, looking upon him as somewhat curious, still one is apt at times to become sceptical without due reason.

Suddenly one evening when never thinking about him for a second, in he walks going up to the bar for a beverage, whilst consuming starts viewing the assembly, undoubtedly spotting myself, for presently he strolls over with a smile on his countenance, remarking : “Here I am again !” With our entering into quite a general chat, when he changed the trend by saying :

How’s the Banjo ? Are you busy ?

With my replying that my instrument was quite fit, and the work considerable.

What about another Sunday Night ? End of next week !

Delighted !

Well, book it !

Meet me here same time as last, and we’ll go and dine with some friends in Park Lane who are also keen on music !

On the appointed Sunday arrived somewhat before my

time, got chatting with various members, when one said : "Where are you off to-night?" "Going out with the Hon. R—— to dinner, who will shortly be calling for me."

The Honble. friend was certainly behindhand this trip, for 7.45, no appearance, 8 p.m., still no change, with several of the chaps who were busy with their dinners suddenly began chipping, shouting from across the room :

How are the Hors d'œuvres ?

Was the Soup bonnie ?

Eight-fifteen, position unaltered, with still more heckling regards the entrée and the bird, one husky voice broadcasting : "Any Poms?"

Eight-thirty disgusted and absolutely famished, couldn't wait any longer, watching my fellow members revelling over their carnivorous devourings. "Damn it all, waiter ! Bring me a haddock !"

Fully realizing something serious must have transpired, with the Park Lane proposition off.

Didn't leave the Club till well after two, and still no signs of my friend, hence strolled home completely mystified and somewhat a bit anxious, naturally a wee disappointed, for had anticipated an enjoyable and lucrative evening.

Turning up the next morning about 12.30, said to the bartender :

You were on duty last night, weren't you ?

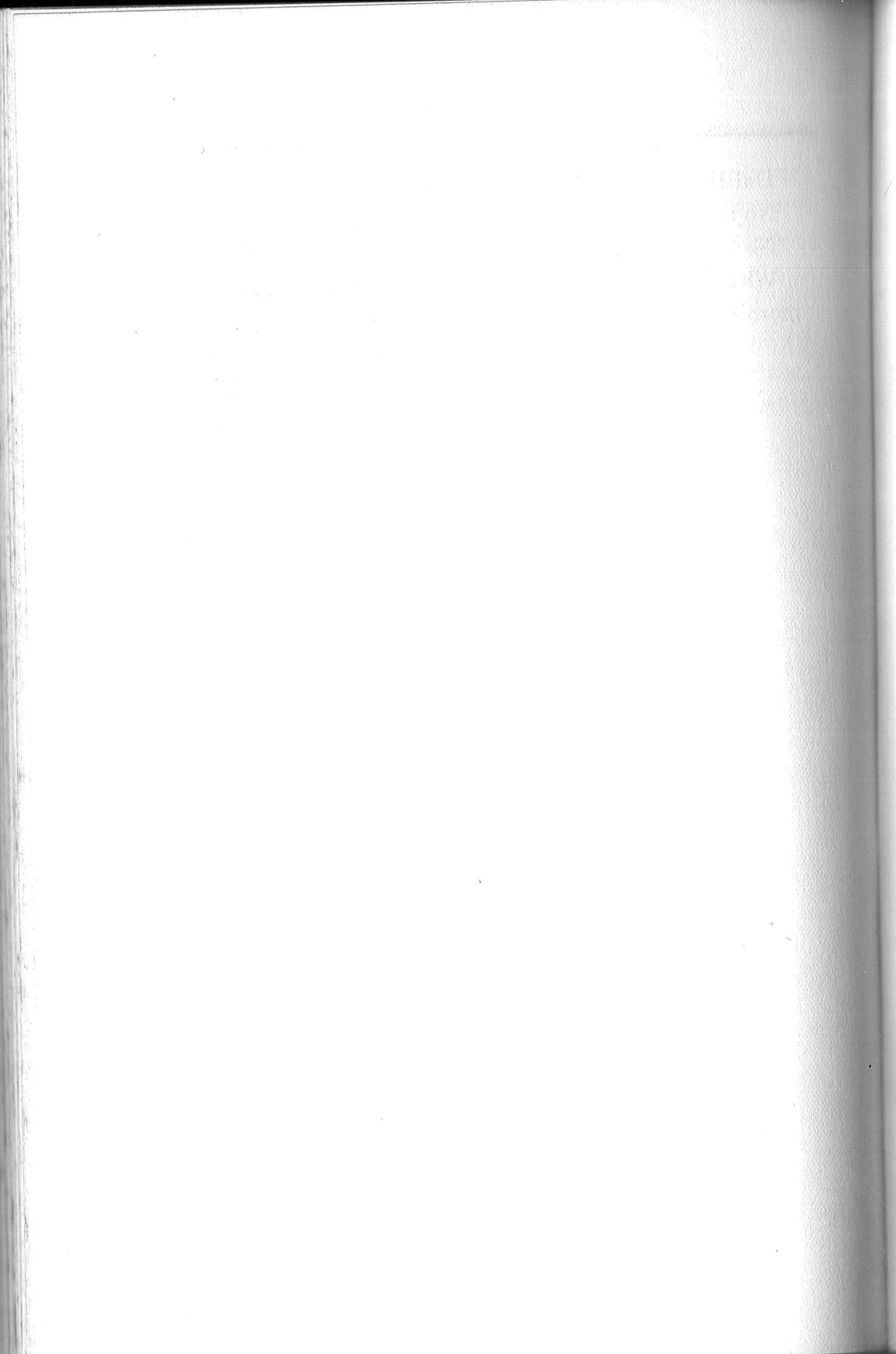
Yes, Sir !

Did the Honble. R—— turn up ?

No ! But haven't you heard about him ?

No ! What's up ?

Why, they found his body in Hyde Park ! Yesterday morning ! Lined up with a six-shooter !



ODDMENTS

CHAPTER XXVIII

ODDMENTS

THE Savoy Restaurant, in its earliest prime, instantly became the ultra fashionable resort of the monied tribes, with many unique, remarkable, and festive gatherings being held within its domain, for just at that period the South African Mining Boom was beginning to thoroughly effervesce, hence numbers of the magnates connected with this planting industry, suddenly becoming over-flushed with specie, also devoted worshippers, both of the palatable and the palestricing of abdominal fodder, used to toss it about, interspersed with grandeurial splendour, giving sequences of lavish banquets, followed by chic musicals.

Frequently being no uncommon sight to witness eighty to a hundred gourmandizers feasting away on the fat of the land, hence naturally all this epicurean squander mighty soon told its tale, quickly boosting the boom, for London then was just juicy ripe, having had nothing special in the stocking market to get dizzy over since the Nitrate Scramble, were like a nursery of kids, waiting for a fresh toy to tickle them up, new companies springing out most every

day, followed with all manner of wild rumours, such as the richest Croesus vein of glitter ever known, in fact unprecedented, had been struck, with the gullible flocking to grab the script.

Quite remembering one acquaintance who sopped it so bad, planking down all available coinlets, for all he could get allotted, then suddenly missing him for a few months, wondering where he'd hiked to, only to run against him later on, wearing a mournful expression, at last confessing he'd such a folio of pulp in one venture, thought it would accelerate his enjoyment to trip out and investigate, and did, finding it an ornamental lake, where they let rowboats out at eighteenpence an hour.

Still the boom flew on, with intrepid alacrity, the schemers, by undaunted cleverness, successfully succeeding in inveigling several feministic society leaders, by re-additioning swan-song commissions, who itchy perceived imaginary mirages of fabulous oof floating in the offing, hence couldn't forgo the temptation to well pepper the seeds of Moses, amongst their flocks of satellites, their glibbering flow of saporific pleasantries, proving so convincing and irresistible, naturally drew myriads of pigeons to dabble in the gamble.

The most remarkable gathering coming under my vision being a banquet engineered by the same fraternity, who dispensed liberality, even to the tune of something sensational befitting entertainment for such events, for the show following this repast I've never witnessed its equal,

the miniature stage, incased in delicate floral structures, complete in scenery and lighting, in fact the only thing missing, the orchestra in front, a Steinway Grand officiating in its stead, the audience, entirely stag, seated in clusters of comfy chairs, surrounding tables, holding their requisites both wet and dry, believing it was one of the last occasions of personally enjoying a chat with Sir Arthur Sullivan.

The array of artistic talent, simply unique, Florence St. John, Katie Seymour and Teddy Payne, with even Ivan Caryll to play for them, rendering their Gaiety successes, Charles Bertram, Arthur Roberts, Cinquevalli, and innumerable other clever turns, carrying on one continuous programme till well past two in the morn, followed by a special supper for the artists, evolving into one of the most amusing rags I've ever got connected with, for what with Cinquevalli juggling mutton cutlets and cutlery, and Arthur Roberts at his zenith in gagging, the soreness from convulsive laughter becoming almost unbearable.

At the close, one of the head waiters, noticing my admiration of a mammoth floral emblem, remarked I'd better cart it home, and did, hiking it onto the roof of the growler, creating the appearance of a petite hearse, with Arthur Roberts and self only just alive, cooped inside, causing a huge laugh from the bunch seeing us off, tossing gags and quips, until we'd far passed the hearing zone.

Booked again, for a sprinkling of the same contingent, for after dinner at the Amphitriion Club, arrived about

10.30 having previously fulfilled a concert engagement, when upon entering the feasting abode, observed a chap wriggling about on the floor, muttering away, going through all manner of contortions, leaving me wondering if it was an imitation of a dog fight, or the Terrible Turk, hence upon asking the head waiter what the stunt signified, being informed it was Barney Barnato, rendering a recitation, possibly extremely clever if you once gripped the gist of it, for the audience appeared enthralled, giving vent to bravos, and prolonged applause at the finish.

Certainly these magnates displayed a thoroughly hospitable vein towards the artists engaged to entertain, insisting on over-replenishing one with the choicest fruits, delicacies, and perfection of cigars, handing out enormous Havanas, almost the length of the present-day lady's umbrella, picked from six to the box, occupying fully two hours, if ever smoked to a butt, but whatever else had they in life to crave for, beyond making the dough, and resuscitating their sustenance.

Several ultimately becoming members of the Pelican, got to knowing them intimately, finding amongst this coterie cheery and agreeable companions, yet ever ready to ferret out one's knowledge as to the happenings within the fashionable side of society life, invariably asking you on the quiet: "How'd dey do tings? Vere you blayed last night?" Seeming ever grateful for any information they might possibly extract, for from several little incidents, and things that dropped, surmised their evolution might

possibly have been via Berlin, Brixton, Bloomsbury, Park Lane.

Amongst themselves were undoubtedly inveterate gamblers, their passion for cards proverbial, invariably winding up their various socials either at Poker, or Chemin de fer, personally never forgetting one outstanding occasion at the Bristol, witnessing two of them trying to bluff each other, running a Jack Pot up to £1,400 before : "I'll see you!" was drawled out, with two pairs, Jacks up, scooping the pool.

The first opening of the Metropole at Brighton happened just about Christmas, this bunch mustered a festive party for the usual holidays, purloining the best rooms in this booth, fortunately for myself, not only invited as a guest, but also engaged at a lucrative fee to render entertainment, when and where required, we Pullmaning it from Victoria, on Friday afternoon, arriving at this luxurious hostel, just before dinner, my requisitioner immediately sending a crisp tenner to the chef with instructions for a special dainty dinner, proving a peach, when washed down with Imperial Brut, my host informing me that afterwards we were all off to Sam Lewis's new house, in Brunswick Terrace, to help christen, as Sam himself only views it, for the absolute first this very eve.

Fully a dozen of us soon went hiking through Sam's doorway, relegating our outer props, then trooping upstairs, with Mrs. Sam ablaze with tiamonds, greeting us most cordially, being famed as a ripping good sort, hence

after the usual gusto palaver, music being proposed, with a long-cropped wallopyinski making mincemeat of a famous rhapsody, followed by myself entering the arena, which by that time signs of fidgetyitis were becoming noticeable amongst several male members, simply itching to get at the cards.

Sam at once agreeing to a gentle flutter, as long as no bank exceeded a hundred quid opener, but wouldn't allow any thousand pounders, the first night in his new home, with the rest naturally acquiescing to abide, the entire group shortly making for the dining-room below, where they went hot at it, till far past three, myself punting occasionally on the outside, with half jimmies, eventually dropping three pound ten.

It was simply an education to watch Sam, when actually in the gambling ring, his cool collectiveness, with generally a faint trace of smile on his face, quickly on the alert, to finesse a move, never giving a trace of his schemes away, by unconscious bodily actions, for stood beside him one day at Monte Carlo, noticing him, stoic as a sphinx, winning eight maximums running, at trente quarante.

Cupid cunningly getting busy with the infectious darts, several of the fraternity by way of diversity got speculating in nuptial bonds, feeling they'd at last raked in sufficient, both to install and support a frau, went merrily through the hoop, in style grandioso, ultimately settling down in palatial mansions, blossoming forth with lavish hospitality in the way of smart dinners and receptions, with one

especially nice disciple, invariably showing extreme partiality towards myself, in fact kindness personified, insisted upon my being present at the consecration of his new home, not only desiring my playing, but honouring me with an invite to dinner, feeling certain I'd quite overlook religious formalities.

Not only was this abode exceptionally beautiful, but the feast superb, myself having a bonnie time, knowing everybody so well, enjoying all the little thrusts and jokes, fired off at my expense, naturally greatly adding to their pleasures, with at last the host announcing he'd installed a billiard room, the table part only this very day completed, hence he was going to call on friend Karmeyer to break the ice by demonstrating what three balls can do.

So after coffees, lighting huge coronas, we all adjourned for the fray, myself getting quickly to work, doing a few fancy ones, besides generally manipulating the ivories, when at last, endeavouring to execute a difficult screw, jerked my cue back so suddenly that one onlooker received the butt, clean on the bridge of his nose, reducing it almost, gentilian level.

The poor chap, absolutely stunned for a minute or so, then suffering agonies, the ruby fluid spurting from his nostrils, almost a continual stream, taking incessant aqua applications, before bending to treatment, even then at the finish, compelled to have court plaster affixed to the bruise, certainly a most unfortunate conclusion to a billiard stunt, myself naturally offering a thousand apologies, receiving

in return entire exoneration, being assured it was purely his fault, for stretching his neck too far forward, still such cruel hard luck never deterred him from being tapped by the blade at the Palace of Fame, arising Sir Knight, installing his aristocratical frame in a Scottish Castle.

One of the most successful soubrettes from Yankeyville, fairly capturing London during the nineties, was certainly May Yohe, making her first appearance at the Lyric in *The Magic Opal*, followed on by *Little Christopher Columbus*, her singing carried with it, such an unusual charm and warmth of tonal colour, completely thrilling town at the time, especially her rendering of "Honey, Ma Honey!" and "Lazily, Drowsily!" Establishing herself instantly as a firm favourite.

One well-known nobleman, becoming so enamoured, very shortly won her hand in matrimony, still the little queen of song stuck to the attraction of the footlights, appearing in further successes, one especially being *The Lady Slavey* at the Avenue, with Bill Greet, the manager, sending her rushing up to my place one day over a coon song I'd written, the little lady having taken a great fancy to same, wanting me to let her star it, which ultimately consented, with the thing shortly thrown into rehearsal, hence frequently used to attend the theatre, watching the trend of events.

It was during such sessions that led me to form such a high opinion of this capricious star, for her consideration to the comforts of the chorus girls becoming so absolutely marked, for happened to be sitting beside His Lordship

at one rehearsal, when Her Ladyship comes skipping round from the stage, telling him to go at once over to the Metropole Hotel for a half-dozen fiz, and a truckload of chicken sandwiches, saying these poor girls have been working the whole night without a thing past their lips, and certainly can't go on much longer, so off His Lordship skips, doing the needful, for frequently such rehearsals went on long past midnight, and personally know her consideration and kindness didn't end there, for they were all sent home in hansoms, at her expense as well.

The chorus absolutely adored her, which was more than noticeable in the support they rendered, so did everybody else behind the scenes, for such was the delightful trait in her character.

The opening night was to be honoured by the presence of H.R.H. Prince of Wales, the Royal Party occupying one of the stage boxes, so May Yohe insisted upon my joining the orchestra in the second act, during the rendering of the coon song, it proving an amusing experience, for several acquaintances in the audience, noticing my appearance, waved their programmes with smiles, still the song went great, with prolonged applause, everybody seemingly delighted, for the tonal colour of the banjo, standing out quite prominent, and believe it was one of the earliest instances that Sir Henry Wood wielded the baton.

One of the most interesting houses it's been my good fortune to enter was in Collingham Gardens, the home of the Earl of Wilton, playing there one evening for Viscount

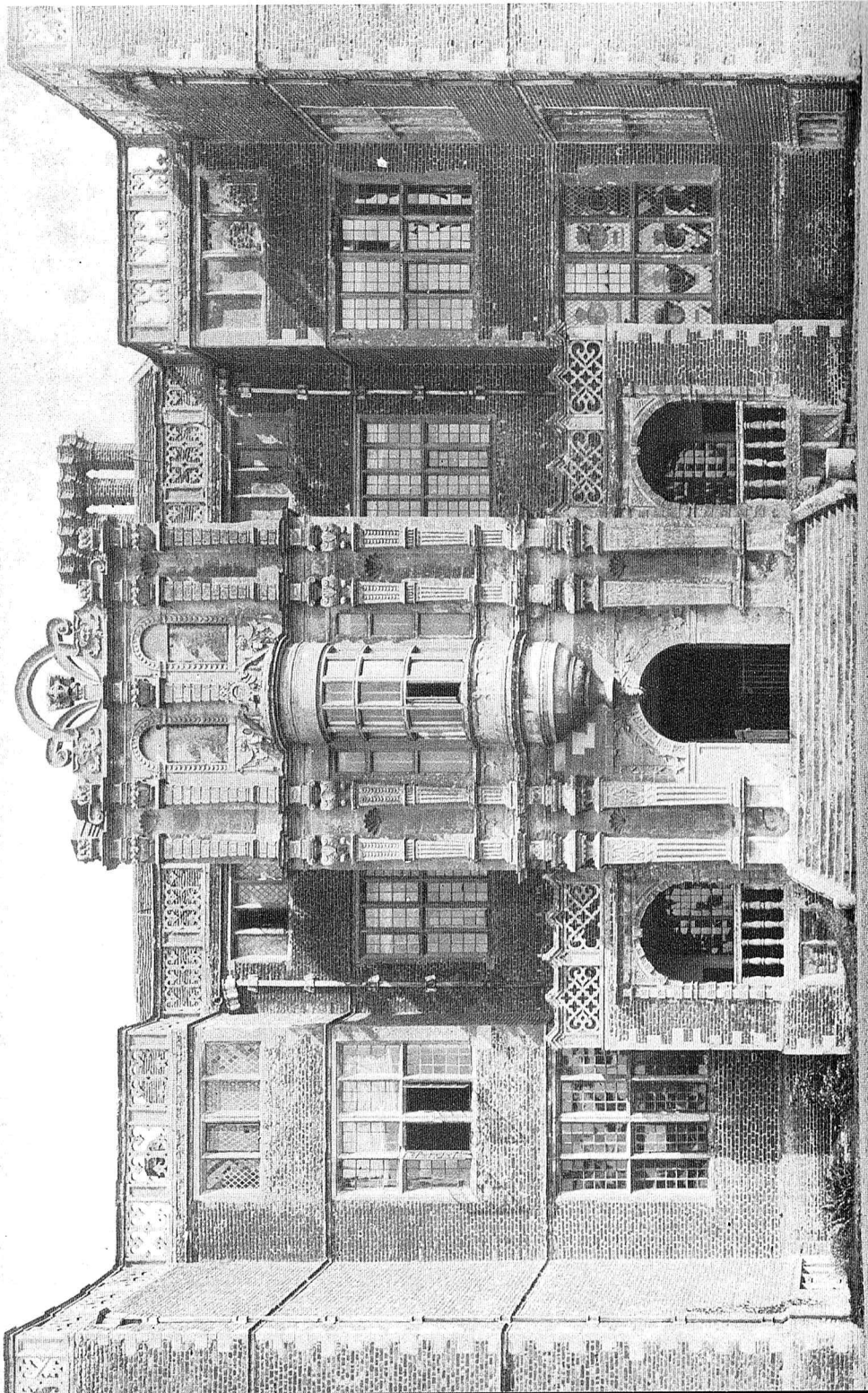
Grey de Wilton, and a few friends, was simply amazed upon entering the drawing room, with at least one quarter of same occupied by an elaborate looking organ, for although the manual was installed in an appropriate spot, every nook, corner and alcove contained the necessary pipes, all being artistically treated in a delightful colour scheme, blending effectively with the rest of the room.

Besides these various sections constituting the organ, there were no other adornments on the walls, beyond one magnificent large Gainsborough, only a few comfy chairs and chesterfield, a Steinway Grand, but no ornaments either in china or bronze to rattle or sing out the moment their tonal pitch happens to be touched.

The Viscount informed me that the greatest hobby his father enjoyed when alive was music, and had the house so designed and built to install this immense organ, with lengths of pipe running virtually into mileage, for the working was solely by water power.

Doubt if there is a similar room anywhere else in existence, yet fully remember the colossal orchestrion installed within the large hall at Ingestre, the Earl of Shrewsbury's seat in Staffordshire, which was led to understand was specially designed and built in Germany, and well recall the cylinder of Gounod's *Faust* being lifted into its place, taking two persons to accomplish the feat, and when releasing the switch, played for fully forty minutes, and certainly was a masterpiece both for quality of tone and orchestration.

COUNTRY HOMES



CHAPTER XXIX

COUNTRY HOMES

POSSIBLY no other country, in comparison of area, contains so many historical homes as old England. These beautiful estates with long trails of tradition attached, in many instances taking them back hundreds of years, more than often in which the direct descendants of the original families still dominate, becoming an emblem and backbone of the solidity and character of the nation.

Sections of a few of these famous places are occasionally thrown open for inspection to the tourist on certain days during the year, yet visiting and strolling through such is rather similar to spending a few hours within Hampton Court Galleries, bar the railings, for the conditions naturally being so formal, one never sniffs nor breathes the atmosphere of anything approaching what these ancestral abodes are like, for that can only be gathered and enjoyed within the circles of the family life itself, when it then assumes manifestation.

Personally, have been more than fortunate in having the opportunity come my way, giving me the good luck

chance of enjoying an entrée into several, and deem it a pleasure endeavouring to portray in a somewhat humble way the charms of one or two.

It was during the winter of 1890 upon receiving instructions from my agent to proceed to Stafford, put up at a certain hotel, where accommodation had been allotted, and after dinner a conveyance would call taking me over to Ingestre ! The home of the Earl of Shrewsbury.

Such instructions were carried out, there being no slips, for the carriage arrived almost immediately following the repast, and the journey started, no doubt covering several miles, for it was well over a half hour, although allowing for the frosty roads, before reaching our destination.

Had hardly divested my outer coverings, when His Lordship burst into the lobby greeting my accompanist and myself with a generous welcome, immediately requesting us to follow on, entering into the magnificent hall of the house, where numerous others were present, when suddenly heard a familiar voice remark :

What the *devil* you doing here !

Looking somewhat perplexed at the individual uttering this cheery outburst, perceived it no other than Aubrey Coventry, all got up as a Christy Minstrel, no mistake about the costume, simply it, the real goods, nothing missing, the true distinctive cork-faced entertainer, not even the elongated flapping toes to the shoes being absent, also carrying an old-fashioned smooth arm banjo, for he said his cousin (Lord Shrewsbury) hadn't even mentioned

the fact about my coming, still you're sure in for some great fun to-night, for there's an amusing show on, being given for the benefit of one of the oldest tenants on the estate, and certainly appeared delighted to think I was to have a finger in the pie, for all the other performers were amateurs, and the large ballroom will be packed with county folk and tenantry.

Lord Shrewsbury suggested that he'd just like to show me the entrance to the stage, finding same of considerable size with the piano in a proper place, brilliant footlights, side cloths, in fact a mighty well-thought-out edifice.

The show went with a bang from start to finish, the audience most enthusiastic, and for one of my encores, disbanded my Jo, resorting to the old stunt with the long lead pencil, resting lightly against my teeth, playing the mocking bird with variations, which seemed to rather bewilder the listeners to such an extent that upon making my exit, His Lordship whipped the pencil from my fingers, ascending the platform holding the mystic high above his head, showing the audience what was used to extract the weird sounds.

After the show, the house party indulged in a sumptuous supper, which teemed with laughter and good fellowship, clearly portraying the true atmosphere surrounding such a circle, and during the enjoyment of same, whilst sitting beside Lord Shrewsbury, His Lordship suddenly enquired in a soft undertone, if my return to town the next day was imperative, and upon assuring him that there was nothing

urgent for the moment, suggested my coming back for a day or so, mentioning that he would like me to play for Her Ladyship after tea, and the following night the Servants' Ball was taking place, and thought possibly it might amuse me.

Naturally such a proposition wasn't turned down, in fact just the reverse, and we both again landed at Ingestre for lunch, giving me some idea of the park on the drive over, and although the ground was bathed in snow, one derived a good impression of the beauties of the estate when Spring broke forth with its charm and splendours, still the old church was interesting, and my accompanist gave a short recital on the organ to a small contingent of the guests that were showing us round, but the stables were a dream, in fact the most fascinating personally to all the various buildings, for they simply teemed with the grandest of horse flesh, both hunters and coach horses, for Lord Shrewsbury used to run the coach from Alton Towers, his Derbyshire seat, to Buxton.

Her Ladyship's section was a delight to view, the large lounge most comfortably and sportively furnished, with all the hunting paraphernalia hanging on the panelled walls, and just slipping through a door at the far end, led to the long series of box stalls, where the favourites were harboured.

My playing for Her Ladyship and the house party was held as scheduled in the beautiful large hall containing many exquisite specimens of antique furniture, and a few interesting old sedan chairs, and at the far end is installed

the mammoth orchestrion ; never before perceived such a huge automatic, the only drawback being the loading, for it takes two persons to lift the weighty cylinders into their place, still one is relieved of the trouble of interchanging every few moments like on the majority of gramophones, for these barrels go on playing for close on three-quarters of an hour, if so desired.

The evening of the Servants' Ball started with a banquet to the house party, augmented by a sprinkling from the surrounding gentry, the gentlemen all adorned in their scarlet, lending a delightful vista, harmonizing most effectively with the gold-plated service, which was brought into action throughout this repast, especially the massive candelabras, exquisite in design, casting a soft radiant glow over floral decorations, as well as the handsome gowns worn by the ladies, being my first experience in viewing such a classic spectacle.

As we proceeded to the ballroom where a large muster had already assembled, merriment, good cheer and laughter predominated, all eagerly awaiting for the opening of the event by Her Ladyship, when, to my utmost surprise, honoured myself with the first dance as the band struck up a lively polka, and the entire floor was soon alive with innumerable couples skipping about to their hearts' content.

In the cosy corner of the large hall was installed a small table, and His Lordship quietly informed me that a bottle of the boy would always be found there whenever one felt the essential invigorating was necessary, hence it began to

look rather a stormy weather night, and whilst the band broke off for supper, my pianist and self slipped into the breach, playing them galops, polkas and waltzes, and the dancers seemed to greatly enjoy the change over, but we were unfortunately compelled into the repetition of several numbers, as our repertoire in dance tunes was certainly most limited.

The next task being deputed to enact, was escorting several of the visitors in to supper, and fail to remember the number of trips enacted from the ballroom to the feasting board, still fully remember it had turned seven a.m. before being compelled to give in through sheer exhaustion, and quietly slipped away to my room, leaving still a large contingent not yet fully satisfied to effect their departure.

These old-time Servants' Balls were certainly some affair, and at that period quite the vogue amongst many of the landed owners, certainly the most cherished event of the year for those so employed within, both the household and the estate always anticipated and feverishly looked forward to.

The late Charles Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, was certainly a wonderful host, knowing to a T just how to make you feel at home, enjoying yourself, whilst recipient of his generous hospitality under the roof of his beautiful ancestral edifice, yet every move was carried out in the simplest form and manner, never the slightest suspicion of exaggeration prevailing.

Undoubtedly the old customs, carried out in the late

Victorian Era, possessed a most distinctive charm, especially in such noble homes like Ingestre, but fear with all the drastic alterations in the present day modes of life, they are to be unfortunately reckoned as relics of the past.

Hindlip Hall, a few miles out of Worcester, was another of these delightful old houses, my presence being required to entertain the house party after two successive hunting dinners, again noticed all the gentlemen adorned in their scarlet evening kit, with the ladies gowned in black, the effect specially in the drawing-room, with only the soft rays from the various oil lamps, was singularly striking.

Houghton Hall, in Norfolk, when Viscount Grey de Wilton was in possession, was especially notable for its gaiety, for His Lordship not only entertained largely, but lavishly, for when large house parties were in force, some famous string band was always in evidence, playing during tea, dinner, and generally for some time after, as well as individual turns appearing occasionally to amuse the guests.

His Lordship was a crack shot, and the shooting parties generally mustered the most famous guns amongst the élite, my being there, similar to that at Hindlip, and the few days spent were certainly interesting, it being quite a sight to watch the brake leave after breakfast with the guns, the same being driven postillion, and the luncheons served out in the open, carried through on rather an extensive scale.

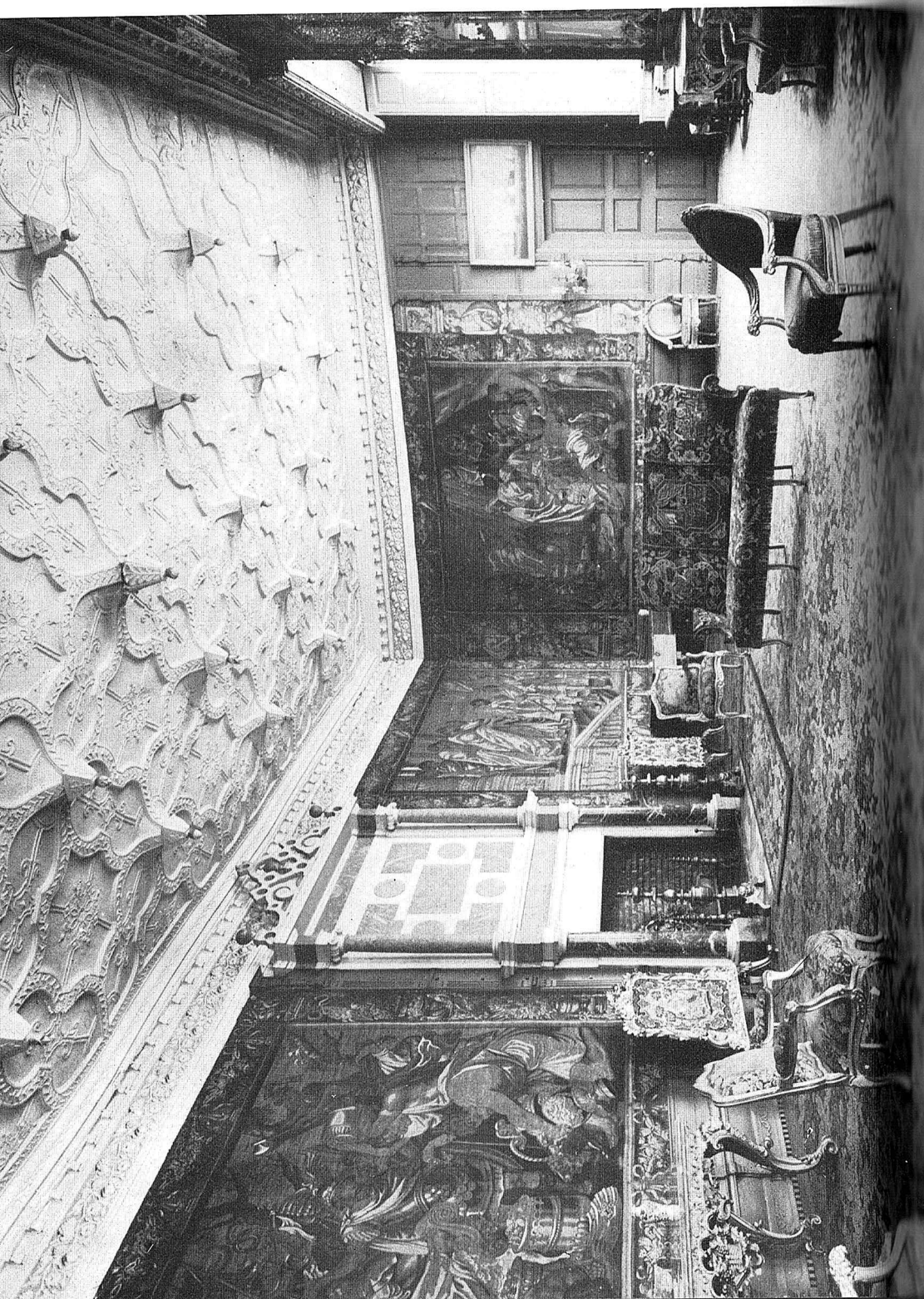
Houghton Hall was built, so led to understand, by Sir Robert Walpole, but had been modernized with electric

installation and other up-to-date comforts, and for those who admire plenty of marble both in pillars and stairways, would have been proclaimed some house, the park most extensive with beautiful lake and the shooting at that period one of the heaviest bags in the country.

But the most glorious place of all, in my small limited estimation, is Bramshill Park, the seat of Sir Denzil Cope, Bart., situated approximately twelve miles south of Reading, in Northern Hampshire ; here you have the pure unadulterated article, the absolute real goods regards age and tradition, the oldest section of the house originally dating back to 1347 ; still, before alluding to the house itself, and all its glories, would like to endeavour to portray some little idea of the environment this masterpiece possesses.

Its situation lies within a wild park of approximately 2,500 acres, undulating and thickly wooded in places, long avenues of oak virtually forming an awning from one of the park gates up to the crest of the hill, besides the extensive lake with its deep waters, purely spring-fed, a picturesque island within the centre, holding as well massive trees that cast their bending boughs over the glaxis, and in June, when the rhododendrons are in full bloom, this island from the main shore is simply a sight magnific.

Many of the old tree trunks remind the wanderer of what he has already run across in Burnham Beeches, resembling some prehistoric mammalia, and as one conjures on longevity, it's impossible to begin to imagine the centuries these noble monsters must have carried on.



Further afield you run into thickly wooded pines, beyond open plateaus of heather and gorse, and when dipping down the path of Lady Eversley's hill towards the dell, when the bluebells are in bloom, with the background of thickly clustered silver beeches, with the squirrels running about, it's quite beyond one's powers to adequately visualize the vista of this bit of fairyland, in fact you can almost see them skipping about.

It is still rumoured that wild deer exist within this peaceful tract, although personally throughout my numerous rambles have never yet experienced the chance of sighting one, yet centuries back large herds of same undoubtedly infested this section of Hampshire, for the abundance of nature's cover prevailing in those ages offered such ample protection to beasts of such description.

In the days of bows and arrows there is still the old existing legend regarding one of the Primates of England who happened to be a guest at Bramshill, this personage being a strong advocate against the killing of such beasts, purely for sport's sake, was continually airing and expressing his candid views on this subject, but unfortunately the rest of the party, who were unanimously the opposite, started ragging him to such an extent, ridiculing the idea if he did attempt to slay a buck, the animal would simply stand and laugh at him, never fearing for one moment that its life was in jeopardy, this flippancy of abuse so rankled his worthiness, that he agreed to stage a try, and did, when the arrow he fired at a running stag ricocheted

off a large oak, unfortunately piercing the breast of a keeper named Barnes. This fatal catastrophe so unnerved and preyed on the mind of the Primate, that it's believed he built the Alms Houses near Guildford as penance, and to this day this glorious old tree remains known as Barnes's Oak, and is situated down the lane, some little distance from the house, on the south-east side.

That beautiful old church and vicarage of Eversley adjoins the north side Entrance Gates to the Park, and in Sir John Cope's time the famous Reverend Charles Kingsley held the living, and wrote many of his world-famed books within this parsonage, and his grave lies close to the church he so beloved.

Lucy Mallet also wrote a fiction story, using Bramshill House as a background, but calling same Brockenhurst, the title of this work being "The Adventures of Sir Richard Calmady," and several sections of the interior are vividly depicted, especially the Long Gallery and the Red Drawing Room.

To attempt to paint in so many words the innumerable beauties of this historical house, would require the knowledge of a great expert and connoisseur, for the contents are priceless, not only antique furniture, paintings, tapestries, china and other endless works of art, but the gorgeous ceilings in the Rooms of State and Chapel.

Sitting peacefully beside the pine log fire in the spacious hall, enjoying the fragrance of one's baccy, your eyes suddenly begin to wander to all the various sections,

absorbing the numerous beauties of this mediæval, for at the far end stands the Stone Screen, bearing ninety-two shields with the coat of arms painted on, showing the descent of Cope of Bramshill, certainly a most remarkable relic of Gothic Architecture, the flattened arches and pendants adorned, leading to still more rusticated arches in the passage behind the screen.

Around the sides one notices the numerous collections of prehistoric musketry, undoubtedly dating back to the earliest inception of such weapons, the heavy mullioned windows with their leaded panes, upon which are painted the Crests of all the Kings and Queens who have visited Bramshill, during the occupancy by the family of Cope, and believe I'm right in remembering the earliest Royalty dating as far back as the early seventeenth century, and so they go down towards our present Royal Family, also have been led to understand that Her Majesty Queen Mary has honoured Bramshill with her presence, and know the Duke of Connaught, who is an ardent admirer of this unique house, has on more than one occasion enjoyed its romantic grandeur.

The walls of the spacious lounge room beyond the Staircase are hung with the old Mortlake Tapestries, and leading from same is the panelled Dining Hall, with two gorgeous fire-places, over same hang fine examples of both Rubens and Van Dyke, this exquisite room during dinner one night, counted fifty-five candles of various sizes alight, hence one can easily imagine the picturesqueness of such an

occasion, and upon the same evening after the ladies had retired from the table, whilst sitting beside my host, sipping our coffee, suddenly observed the magnificent gold vase centre piece holding flowers, hence asked Sir Denzil whatsoever it was, being informed it was the first Gold Cup ever run for at Goodwood, won by one of his ancestors.

The other famous pictures adorning the walls of the Dining Hall besides those previously alluded to, consist of two more Van Dykes, two Knellers, and one of Hogarth's greatest efforts, Henry VIII meeting Anne Boleyn for the first time.

Ascending the grand oak stairway to the first floor, one passes a Hoppner of Sir Anthony Cope, and a few steps further a series of some beautiful Lely's, quite on a par with those within the celebrated Gallery of Lely's at Hampton Court.

At the head of the stairs, turning right, one enters the Chapel Drawing Room, which can only be truly described as an exquisite treasure spot, for the ceiling and carved stone chimney-piece truly noble in themselves.

The shape of this room is certainly novel, with two deep bays and numerous windows, here again are seen another priceless lot of ancestral portraits, whilst the furniture of Georgian period, comprising stools with original needlework coverings, belonging to a set of chairs either in Gothic or Chinese character, still apart from such glorious examples of furniture, are the numerous valuable pieces of china, miniatures, etc.

The entrance to the Chapel is gained from one corner of the room just mentioned, and is built within the oldest tower of the house, it is lofty with beautiful stained-glass windows, and priceless tapestries adorn the walls.

Service is held every Sunday morning at nine o'clock, and besides the family, is attended by many living in the locality.

The State Drawing Room is entered on the other side of the landing, again the wonderful ceiling, and the walls hold the renowned tapestries, "The Triumph of Decius," designed, so led to understand, by Rubens, and believe to this day it's a mystery how they ever found their way into the House of Bramshill.

Here again is seen another totally different style of antique furniture, yet in perfect keeping with the grandeur of this enchanting apartment, and further along one passes into the spacious Library, with its secret door in the far corner that leads to a lofty passage after ascending a short flight of steps; this section of the house was used for harbouring the Royal Troops during anticipated invasions, whilst the old Watch Towers at the end of the terrace always held guards to be ever on the look-out.

Beyond the Library one comes to the Long Gallery, approximately one hundred and twenty feet, again the heavy mullioned windows looking out on to the various gardens and terraces, the contents of this huge hall comprise several old chests, and it has been rumoured that the legend of the Mistletoe Bough was associated with this old

spot, but Sir Denzil himself places no credence in such assumption.

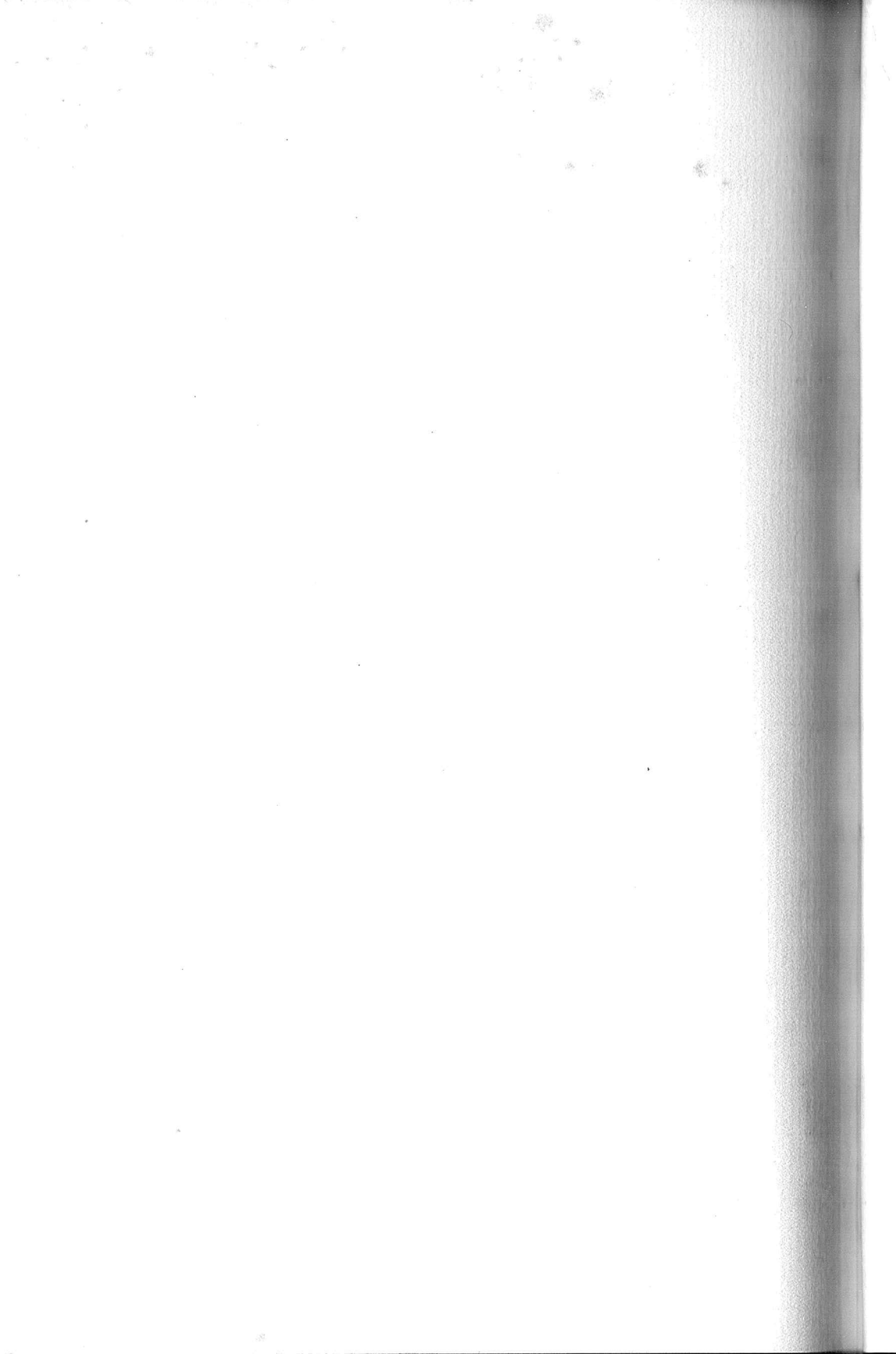
Without doubt the furniture scattered here and there is the most ancient of any within the house, and it certainly would be unsafe to attempt to make yourself comfortable on any piece.

The long terrace runs from one wing to the other, with the most delightful loggias at each end containing richly carved seats and panelling of the early seventeenth century, and in summer time at the shaded end of the trocco, this loggia is used at tea time, for the view over the sloping fields down to the river Hart, and beyond over that historical Hazeley Heath, is one of soothing vividness.

Am afraid one could go along almost indefinitely describing the wonders and beauties of this baronial home, and doubt if personally have discovered one quarter of them, for it has been only through the banjo that friendship between Sir Denzil and myself began to grow and the hospitality extended on so many occasions gave me some of the greatest joys experienced in my life, for Sir Denzil's greatest hobby outside his work on his estate, was the playing of the instrument, and with the delightful accompanying on the piano by his charming sister, our concerted items frequently went on until early in the morning ; in fact, it was once a standing joke that we had played the Country Dances eight times on one occasion, but one couldn't resist the feeling of such rhythmic tempo surrounded

as we were with such atmosphere, for the nightingales not only sang to you the whole night, but the livelong day as well ; in fact, the solace of this exquisite phenomenon would tend to make everything burst into song in its own characteristic way.

SCRAPS



CHAPTER XXX

SCRAPS

A STRANGE VISITOR

CHATTING one morning in my study with Sir Daniel Gooch, when suddenly he exclaimed :

Cammeyer ! Look ! What the devil's that ?

Pointing to an enormous insect wriggling on the floor, jerking its head back and striking out with the regularity of a pendulum, certainly a most uncanny looking object, brownish in colour, as if it had been solignumed, such antics went silently on whilst we both sat watching.

Sir Daniel then suggested, " How can we bag it ? "

Foraging about upstairs found a large empty jam-jar, which Sir Daniel quietly slipped over his highness, and by aid of a stiff bit of cardboard slowly manipulated underneath, landed the gent safely within the once sweetened zone.

What's the next move, we both funnily enough proclaimed in unison, a Naturalist, of course ! " I've hit it ! " said Sir Daniel. " Rowland Ward's ! " Hence carefully

wrapping up the jar, moved off to the taxidermist's, hoping to get the mystery solved.

Fortunately the moment we opened the shop's door, the manager happily came forward, greeting us, we immediately explaining our mission, and that we'd value his opinion on our recent capture.

"Come this way," he said, taking us into his private sanctum, where we hurriedly removed the wrapping, and a smile lit across his countenance the moment he perceived the passenger.

You've captured an emaciated scorpion ! Where did you pick it up ?

"Off the floor of Mr. Cammeyer's room," said Sir Daniel. The manager looking rather puzzled, started scratching his head. No doubt endeavouring to think it out. At last remarked :

In a London house ! Seems a strange abode for such reptiles ! Has anyone from a tropical climate recently been to see you ?

Yes ! Only an hour ago, an officer in the Indian Army called to bid me good-bye, and then noticed he was wearing a travelling suit that I hadn't previously seen him in !

Possibly that solves it, for scorpions are over partial to the pockets of gents' suits, especially coats, where they secrete themselves for long siestas ! And this one certainly made a mistake, being carted away from his native soil !

Personally then started explaining that I'd noticed the Major pulling out a coloured handkerchief from the breast pocket, but as I was engaged doing something else at the moment, didn't altogether concentrate on his actions.

The manager now seemed fully convinced there was only one solution, that being the scorpion falling from the officer's coat, hence suggested placing same in an hermetically sealed solution, which he did, with Sir Daniel taking it home as a relic.

A BRILLIANT INVITE

THE brother of a famous sporting Peer, strolling up to me one evening after my rendering a selection at a fashionable after-dinner party, remarked :

Simply ripping ! Cammeyer ! Top Hole !

You must come around to my place some time, and we'll have a tune up together ! I play the Bones !

WHEN SULLIVAN PLAYED THE BANJO

FOLLOWING on a private dinner party at the Amphitriton Club in Albemarle Street, at which personally was engaged, it so happened just after rendering a selection, that Mr. Alfred de Rothschild suddenly picked up my instrument and started strumming the novice's three elementary

chords, which rather amused H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, who was seated close by.

Naturally this spontaneous impulse lasted only a few seconds, and the moment it ceased, Sir Arthur Sullivan, who'd stood silently listening, and smilingly watching the manipulation, suddenly said :

If that's all you know, Alfred, you'd better come down to my place, and I'll show you a few more !

This sort of joking outburst greatly surprised me, hence broke in with the question :

Whatever do you know about the banjo ?

Receiving nothing in return, beyond a pleasing smile.

This unexpected incident wasn't instantly forgotten, for I'd held a rather curious feeling for a long time that Sullivan knew something about the Jo, although he never gave you any such impression by alluding to the instrument, still always remembered how he used to attentively listen, and watch my movements, when playing at Mrs. Ronalds', and other receptions, and sort of felt now he'd let the cat out of the bag.

Strolling down Piccadilly one afternoon, ran quite by chance into an acquaintance, who was an old personal friend of Sir Arthur's, they having been youngsters together, so now was my chance to solve the mystery, hence mentioned the incident at the Amphitriton Club, which rather amused him, and he then informed me that Sullivan

did know something about the banjo, for when he was a choir boy, he used to occasionally sing popular light songs, and accompany himself with that instrument.

DUTCH DALY

UNDOUBTEDLY one of the quaintest and most amusing Music Hall turns in the good old days was Dutch Daly. Doubtful if there was the smallest semblance of Dutch blood flowing through his veins, more likely Irish-American—if one was to judge by his accent, also his general mannerisms and actions.

Dutch was certainly an expert on the concertina, and it played at least fifty per cent. in carrying forth his act, his entrance on to the stage was always to the music from that instrument, in conjunction with the orchestra, playing generally the same operatic excerpt as an opening, followed by imitations, using the concertina to squeak or warble like the female canary, then he would say: "Now for the Shemale!" Kicking up some fuss on the instrument, which always caused roars of laughter from all parts of the audience.

Dutch never to my knowledge ever changed his act from one year's end to another, always the same identical material, yet he never seemed to grow stale with the crowd, which was certainly remarkable, always the big noise that brought down the house with big hands, retaining the top-

hole position on the bill, no matter how many West End appearances he made during the year.

There must have been some mystical magnetism about Dutch to have carried on such a successful career over so long a period, for not only was it the Music Halls who were always willing to book his act, but the demand suddenly sprang up to secure his services at private social functions, and it was through the latter that brought us in touch with one another, and gave me the opportunity to judge just how he adapted his act under such conditions.

Dutch never minced matters one iota the moment he took the floor, always leading off with the operatic excerpt, followed by the canary imitations, then hugging the concertina under the left arm, with a rather drastic solemnity, regards facial expression, would start to relate ! That he'd just taken a job in a drapery establishment, and that the boss was putting him through his traces as a salesman behind the counter.

The Boss one morning informs him ! If anybody comes in for any silk, to immediately announce the price has gone up 3s. per yard, and if the customer offers any kick, to at once say, especially if a woman client :

Haven't you heard, Madam ! The terrible plague in China ! Killing all the Silk Worms !

Dutch told the Boss he quite understood and would work the oracle for all it was worth, and he then went about his job of dusting the counter, etc.

Presently in comes a lady, gliding up to the counter, saying :

I want three yards of tape ! What is the price ?

Two shillings a yard, Madam !

Ridiculous ! Outrageous !

Haven't you heard, Madam !

The Beethoven Sonata, written Soonata he came to this country, letting go a sparkling fantasia on the concertina.

THE END

